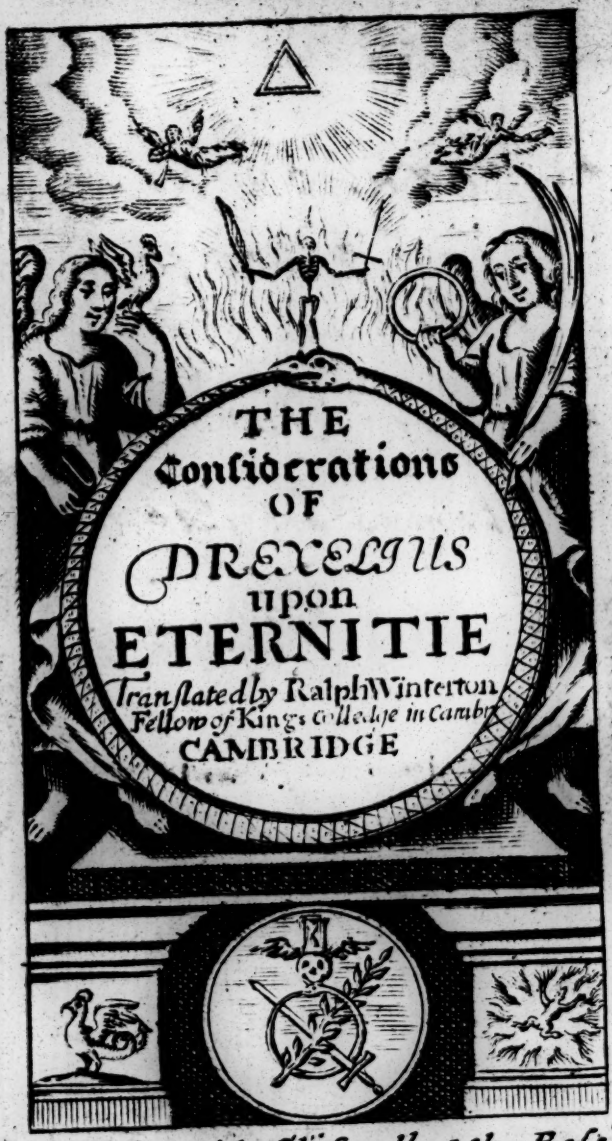
Given by an unfeigned friend.

THE Considerations OF *DREXELIUS* UPON ETERNITY.

Translated by *Ralph Winterton*, Fellow of *Kings* Colledge in *Cambridge*. 1632.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. R.* for *Richard Chiswel*, at the Rose and Crown in St. *Pauls-Church-Yard*, MDCLXXXIV.



Printed for Rich: Chiswell at the Rose
and Crown in S.t Pauls Church-yard.
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BRITISH
MUSEUM

To the Right Worſhipful and truly Religious *Eſquire*, Mr. E. BENLOWES of *Brent-Hall* in *Eſſex*.

R. W.
Wiſheth Internal, External, and Eternal Happineſs.

IT *was well anſwered by him, who being asked,* What this life was, *ſaid thus,* It is nothing elſe but the Meditation of Death. *If a man ſhould ask me,* What time is, *I think I might fitly anſwer thus,* It is nothing elſe but the Meditation of Eternity. *Our* Life *is but a* Poſting unto Death, *and our* Time a ſhort days ſail unto Eternity. *In this* Time *of* life *we are as* Pilgrims *and* Strangers, *travelling towards our* Cœleſtial Country. *We are as* Sailors, *bound for the* Haven *of* Eternity. *But we muſt* run *through many* troubles *before we can come to our* journeys end: *We muſt* ſail *through* ſalt *and* bitter waters. *and* paſs *through the* Gulf *of* Death, *before we can come to* Land. *There is a Land which is called,* The Land of the Living; *and there is a Land which is called,* The Land

of Horror and Deſpair: *There is a* two-fold Eternity; *either of the* Bleſſed, *or of the* Curſed: *There is a* twofold Life *after* Death; *either in* Eternal joys. *or* Eternal puniſhments. *It is good therefore in this* ſhort life, *to think upon that* Life which never ſhall have end: *It is good whileſt we are on the way to think upon our* Journeys end: *It is good in* Time, *whileſt we are ſailing, to have an eye ſtill upon our* Compaſs, *and think upon* Eternity. *To think upon* Eternity, *is a* Soveraign Preſervative *to keep us from falling into* Sin: *To think upon* Eternal joys, *ſweetens the* ſalt *and bitter* waters *of* Sorrows *and* Afflictions: *To think upon* Eternal Puniſhments, *makes us not to ſet our hearts upon* Temporal Delights *and* Pleaſures. Heaven *is here on* Earth *in part* enjoyed, *whileſt we* raiſe *up our* thoughts *to* meditate *upon it: And* Hell *may for ever be eſcaped, if by ſerious and frequent* thoughts *thereof, here in this life, we* deſcend *into it. Such* thoughts *as theſe moved* Drexelius *to write theſe* CONSIDERATIONS, *and me alſo to tranſlate them. He wrote upon a* General ſubject; *and every man may challenge a* part in it. *What he wrote, he intended for a publick benefit; and ſo did I in the Tranſlation of it. I hope* He *and* His *ſhall find never the worſe entertainment, becauſe* He *is a* Stranger, *and*

come

come from beyond Seas. It is the honour of our Nation to be kind and courteous unto Strangers. *He was commended unto me by a Traveller, a most religious and learned Gentleman. (Be not angry with me,* Mr. Benlowes, *if I say, He was as like you as can be in every respect; for indeed he was) bred and brought up in the* Romish Religion, *and sent beyond Seas to be confirmed in it, but yet brought home again by divine providence and restored to his Mother the* Church *of* England, *for the* Conversion, *I hope, of many, singled out of all his kindred to be a most* Zealous Protestant; *born to good* Fortunes, *and yet not given to* Pleasures, *wedded to his* Books *and* Devotions, *spending what some call idle time in the best company for the edifying himself or others; counting nothing good which he possesseth, but only that which he doth good withal; taking more care to lay out his money for the good of others, than others in laying up money for themselves. To conclude, A Gentleman of whom I may most truly say, That his* Conversation is in heaven, *his* Discourse *on* things above, *and his* thoughts *upon* Eternity. *Upon such a mans commendation as this, I could not but take a liking to the party commended, and the more I grew acquainted with him, I liked him. It is the counsel of* Horace.

Tu

Tu quem commendes etiam atque etiam aſpice: ne mox
Iucutiant aliena tibi commiſſa pudorem.

Believe me, Mr. Benlowes. *I have had ſuch experience of this party, whom here I commend unto you, that I dare confidently ſay, If you entertain him into your ſervice, you ſhall never repent you of it.* Philip *of* Macedon *appointed one every morning to ſalute him with a* Memento *of* Mortality: Drexelius *his office ſhall be. if you pleaſe, To be your* Remembrancer, *and every Morning, Noon, and Evening, to round you in the ear with a* Memento *of* Eternity. *But I know, that is ſo often in your thoughts, that you need not any to put you in Remembrance of it. Neither yet do I intend here, though I have a fair occaſion, to run over the* Catalogue *of your* Chriſtian Vertues, *ſpecially that part of Chriſtian twins, your* Piety *and* Temperance *with your* Charity *and* Bounty. *For the firſt, they that daily converſe with you, cannot but ſee how you converſe with them. The other pair go along with you whereſoever you go, and though you deſire to hide them, cannot be concealed; in ſpecial, many poor Scholars,* godly *and* devout Miniſters *in the* Univerſity *and* abroad, *of ſeveral Colledges, have had a feeling themſelves of them, and cannot but make them conſpi-*

conſpicuous, nay palpable to others. Theſe ſhall praiſe you in your abſence: for my part, I do not love to praiſe a man to his face. But if the living hold their peace, the dead ſhall riſe up and praiſe you, I mean thoſe many and excellent Books, together with other rare monuments purchaſed at a great price, which without any ſolicitation at all, out of meer affection you bore to Saint Johns Colledge in Cambridge, where you were ſometimes a Student, you have beſtowed on their Library: Their Library, but the moſt magnificent work, and Eternal Monument of the Mecœnas of our age, John Lord Biſhop of Lincoln, and true lover of Learning and, Patron of Scholars. And now it appears, Mr. Benlowes, that you have leſs need of Drexelius his ſervice than before. But howſoever, I pray you, entertain him: Let him have but the honour to wear your Cogniſance, and both He and I will put it upon the file of Thankful Remembrance, and regiſter it for a ſingular act of your Beneficence. Pardon my boldneſs in this: and command me in what liberal ſervice you pleaſe,

10 OC 61

Ralph Winterton.

From Kings Coll.
June 1. 1632.

The

The Epiſtle to the READER.

IF any man, more curious in cenſuring what is done for a common good rather than ſtudious himſelf to promote it, ſhould queſtion me for medling in another mans profeſſion, I might anſwer him in his own kind by way of queſtion, as *Menedemus* in *Terence* anſwered *Chremes* finding fault with him, *Tantumne abs re tua eſt otii tibi, Aliena ut cures, eaque nihil quæ ad te attinent?*. Haſt thou ſo much leiſure as to meddle with that which nothing concerns thee?

But to ſatisfie thee (Courteous Reader) who intendeſt, I know, with the *Bee* to gather *Honey* out of this garden of *Eternity*, and not *Poyſon* with the *Spider*; I hold it fit to acquaint thee with the true occaſion that moved me to tranſlate this book. No *Divine* I am indeed, neither yet can I be if I would never ſo fain: I would I were but worthy the name of a *Phyſician*! But howſoever being deſtinated by the ſtatutes of my private *Colledge* to the ſtudy of *Phyſick*, in the firſt place I thought good to ſpend ſome time in *Arithmetick*, as being a neceſſary inſtrument and help in my *Profeſſion*:

ſeſſion: In which I made ſome progreſs, paſſing from *Numeration*, *Addition*, *Subſtraction*, *Multiplication*, *Diviſion*, *Reduction*, to *the Golden Rule*, or *the Rule of Three*, *The Rule of Falſhood*, *The Rule of Proportion*, and *the Rules of Society*, and the reſt. But the knowledge of this coſt me ſo dear, that I was forced to leave the ſtudy of it: For many nights together I was conſtrained againſt my will to practiſe *Numeration* oftner than I would, telling the clock and could take but little reſt. Whereupon I reſolved with my ſelf to leave the *Arithmetick Schooi*, and ſo I went unto the *Phyſick* and *Muſick Schools*, imploring at one and the ſame time *Hippocrates* and the *Muſes*. For at that time I turned the firſt book of *Hippocrates* his *Aphoriſms* into *Greek* verſes hoping to procure reſt by *Phyſick* and the *Muſick* of *Poetical Numbers*; by which I found ſome reſt indeed; (And therefore ſince, I have well nigh finiſhed at ſpare hours the other ſix books; which, if God permit, may ere long ſee light.) But though I found ſome reſt, yet I did not ſleep ſo ſoundly as at other times. So I left the *Temple* of *Hippocrates* and the *Muſes*, and betook my ſelf unto the *Sanctuary*, to learn of *David* divine *Arithmetick*, which conſiſteth in the due numbring of the days of this ſhort life, by comparing them with the

the years of *Eternity:* And ſo I fell upon tranſlating this book of *Eternity.* And this I found by daily experience to be the beſt *Hypnoticon* that ever I uſed; for it brought me to reſt better thon if I had taken *Diacodion.* Thus I found the old ſaying true, *Where Philoſophy ends, there Phyſick begins; and where Phyſick ends, there Divinity begins;* which I interpret thus (as I found it true by experience:) *When Philoſophy by accident had done me harm, and Phyſick could do me little good, I found perfect help in Divinity.* And having found ſo much good by this book my ſelf, I could not be ſo envious as not impart it unto others for a *Sovereign Medicine,* to procure quiet ſleep. Neither is it good for that only (but far unlike to other medicines, which are only good for ſome one diſeaſe, and falling into unskilful hands oftentimes do more harm than good) it is a *Medicine* fitting all *Ages, Complexions, Conditions, Places, Parts, Diſeaſes Spiritual, and Corporal* whatſoever: It is a *Medicine Preſervative, Curative, Reſtorative:* It is an *Antidote* againſt the *poyſon* of ſin: It is *Dictamnum* to drive out the fiery *darts* of *Satan:* It is *Catholicon* to purge out all ill humours. It is better than *Exhilarans Galeni,* to chear the Heart oppreſſed with *Melancholly:* It is an *Acopon* for all wearineſs,

an

an *Anodynon* for all pains, a *Panchreſton* profitable for all things, or *All-good*. It is *Panacea*, *Hearts-eaſe*, *All-heal*. It is a *rich Treaſury for* Engliſh-men. *A ſtore-houſe for the diſeaſed*, and, *The ready way to long life*, even to bleſſed *Eternity*. Let no man now challenge me for uſurping another mans Office, or treſpaſſing upon *Divines*. I cannot ſee but *Divines* and *Phyſicians* may well agree together: Both are buſied about curing of *Diſeaſes* either *Spiritual* or *Corporal*: And here is a *Medicine* for both. Take it and uſe it, Chriſtian Reader; and thou ſhalt find by thine own experience that it hath all the virtues above-mentioned.

So I commend thee to the *Phyſician* both of *Body* and *Soul*, and heartily deſire thy *Temporal* and *Eternal* Health and Welfare.

Ralph Winterton.

From Kings Coll.
June 1. 1632.

A *Upon*

Upon this Book of Eternity.

TO reach *Eternity* our thoughts firſt climbe.
On the ſucceſſive ſteps and ſtairs of *Time*.
And, what is *Time*? It is by *Poets* call'd,
And by moſt *Painters* repreſented bald:
But *Poets* and the *Painters* are too bold,
For *Time* was never yet a *Minute* old:
Nor yet, God *Saturn*-like, doth it devour
The iſſue which it breeds: For every hour
Were then a Murderer. But while we ſtrain,
And all created Natures for to gain
Time to their Inch of *Being*; in the ſtrife
They quite burn out the *Taper* of their life.
But what's *Eternity*? Good Reader look,
Not on my *Verſes*, but upon this *Book*:
Which I do wiſh (and yet no harm) may be
To all *everlaſting* Stationer, but to thee.

10 OC 61

Richard Williams.

Upon

Upon this Book of Eternity.

LOok on the *Glaſs* of Mans *Mortality*;
Behold the *Mirror* of *Eternity*.
This *Book* is both; Herein behold thy face;
It waxeth old; thy *Glaſs* doth run apace.
It is appointed all men once to die;
And after *Death* ſucceeds *Eternity*.
This *Life*'s no *Life*, which *Time* doth comprehend,
But that's true *Life* indeed, which knows no end:
This *Book* will teach thee ſo to *live* and *die*,
That thou may'ſt live unto *Eternity*.

Thomas Gouge.

Upon this Book of Eternity.

THis *Book's* a *Nautick Chard*; which kept in *Eye*,
Doth *point* at th' *Haven* of bleſt *Eternity*.
[O bleſſed *Heaven!*] At which if thou wouldſt Land.
Let not this *Chard* depart out of thine hand.

S. I.

THE

THE

CONTENTS.

The First Consideration.

What Eternity *is.*

Chap. I. Page.

WHat *men of former times have thought of* Eternity, *and how they have represented it.* 4

II. *The secret sense and meaning of Scripture is unfolded.* 13

III. *Why the place of* Eternity *is called a Mansion.* 18

The Second Consideration.

In what things Nature representeth *Eternity.* 23

I. *What things are* Eternal *in Hell.* 26

II. *Why*

The Contents.

II. *Why Hell is Eternal.* 31
III. *Other motives to the Consideration of* Eternity *drawn from Nature.* 35

The Third Consideration.

Wherein the old *Romans* principally placed their *Eternity.* 41
I. *How far the* Romans *have gone astray from the true way of* Eternity. 51
II. *A better way than the former which the* Romans *followed to* Eternity. 60
III. *That the way of* Eternity *is diligently and carefully to be sought after.* 70

The Fourth Consideration.

How holy *David* meditated upon *Eternity*, and how we should imitate him. 81
I. *Divers Admonitions to think upon* Eternity. 86
II. *That* Eternity *transcends all numbers of* Arithmetick. 88
III. *What effect and fruit the consideration of* Eternity *bringeth forth.* 94

The Fifth Consideration.

How others, even wicked men themselves, have meditated upon *Eternity.* 101

I. *The*

The Contents.

I. *The comparisons of mans labors and the Spiders, one with another.* 108
II. *What is the best question in the World.* 112
III. *How God punisheth here that he may spare hereafter.* A strange Example. 116

The Sixth Consideration.

How the Holy Scripture in many places teacheth us to meditate upon *Eternity.* 123
I. *The answer of the Holy Fathers and the Church about this.* 125
II. *Clear Testimonies of Divine Scripture concerning* Eternity. 138
III. *This life, in respect of that which is to come, is but as a drop to the Ocean.* 143

The Seventh Consideration.

How Christians use to Paint *Eternity.* 157
I. *Christ Inviting.* 160
II. Adam *lamenting.* 162
III. *The Raven croaking.* 165

The Eighth Consideration.

How Christians ought not only to look upon

on the Emblems and Pictures of *Eternity*, but come home and look within themselves, and seriously meditate upon the thing it self. 185

I. Eternity *doth not only cut off all comfort and ease, but even all hope also.* 191

II. Eternity *is a Sea, and a three-headed* Hydra: *It is also a fountain of all joy.* 195

III. *How sweet and precious the taste of* Eternity *is.* 200

The Ninth Consideration.

Seven Conclusions about these Considerations of *Eternity.* 215, 217, 219, 221. 223, 227, 231.

I. *The Punishments of Eternal death.* 242

II. *The reward of Eternal life.* 253

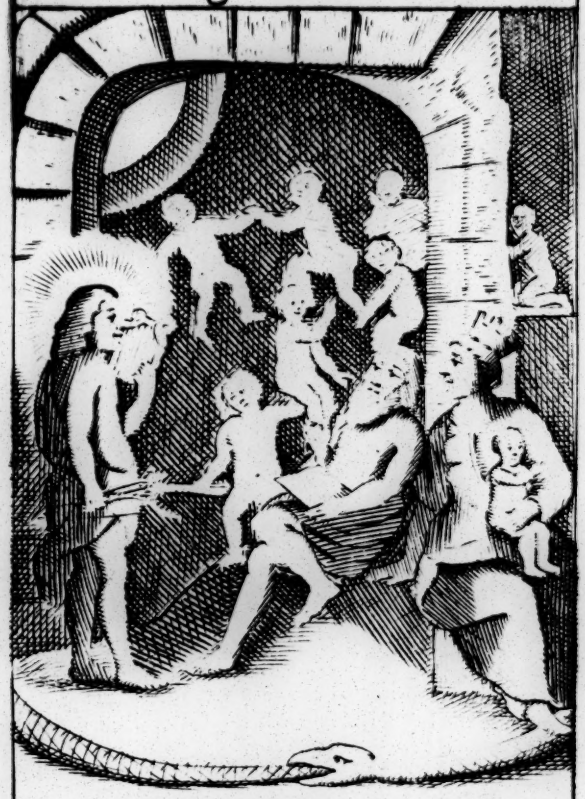
III. *The Conclusion of all.* 267

Considera-

10 OC 61

BRITISH
10 OC 61
MUSEUM

The word of God most High is the fountain of wisedome & her wayes are everlasting commandements Eccl. 5



The infant playes with fate ex Nature, the fool with ETERNITIE but ye wise man shall have dominion over the starres.

Considerations

Upon

ETERNITY.

THE FIRST CONSIDERATION

What Eternity is?

SImonides being asked by *Hiero* King of *Sicily*, *What God was*, desired one day to consider upon it: and after one day past, having not yet found it out, desired yet two days more to consider further upon it; and after two days, he desired three: and to conclude at length he had no answer to return unto the King but this, that the more he thought upon it, the more still he might; for the further he busied himself in the search thereof, the further he was from finding

Cicero lib. 1, de Nat. Deor.

finding it. The thing that we are here now to consider upon is *Eternity*: and the first question that offers it self unto our consideration is, *What Eternity is?* *Lib.* 5. *de Cons.* *Boetius* saith, that it is altogether and at once, the intire and perfect possession of a life that never shall have an end. And let no man take it ill, if we say that it cannot be known, and that the more we search into it, the more we lose our selves in the search of it. For how can that be defined which hath no bounds or limits? If any man urge us further and desire us to shadow it out, at least by some, though obscure, description: our answer is, That it may easier be done by declaring what it is not, rather than what it is; so doth *Plato* concerning God: *In Timeo.* *What God is*, saith he, *that I know not? What he is not, that I know.* So *Augustine* Bishop of *Hippo*, in his sixty fourth Sermon upon the words of our Lord, describeth the true beatitude which is in Heaven, by removing from it the very thought of all evil. *We may more easily find*, saith he, *what is not there, than what is. In heaven there is neither grief, nor sorrow, nor penury, nor defect, nor disease, nor death, nor any evil.* So may we say concerning *Eternity*. For what-

whatsoever in this life we either see with our eyes, or let in by our outward senses, that is not Eternal. *For the things that are seen*, saith St. *Paul*, *are temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal.* Hence every man may say, this my joy, these my pleasures and delights, this treasure, this honour, this stately building, this life of mine, all is *Transitory*, nothing *Eternal*. A man can point at nothing which shall not perish and have an end. Indeed the ignorant multitude use to speak after this manner. This structure is for *Eternity*, this monument is everlasting. And the impatient man is wont to complain that his pains are without end. But these *Eternities* are very short, and a man may easily in words comprehend them: Say what thou canst of the true *Eternity*, thou must needs come far short of it. 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

So saith *Augustine*; *Thou sayest of Eternity whatsoever thou wilt: But therefore thou sayest whatsoever thou wilt, because thou canst not say all, say what thou wilt: But therefore thou must needs say something, that still thou mayest have something to think which thou canst not say.* *In Psal.* 65.

Trismegistus saith, *That the Soul* is the *Horizon* of *Time* and *Eternity*: For, in that *In Asclep.*

it is immortal, it is partaker of *Eternity*; and in that it is infused by God into the body, it is partaker of *Time*. But before we proceed any further, for orders sake let us see what men of former times, *Romans*, *Gracians*, *Egyptians*, and others have thought of *Eternity*. For they acknowledged it for certain, and represented it divers ways.

CHAP. I.

What men of former times have thought of Eternity; and how they have represented it.

FIrst of all, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Ring*, or a *Circle*, which hath neither beginning nor ending, which is proper only to *Gods Eternity*: seeing therefore that God is *Eternal* and his duration is properly called *Eternity*, the *Egyptians* used to signifie *God* by a *Circle*. And the *Persians* thought they honoured God most, when going up to the top of the highest Tower, they called him the *Circle of heaven*. And it was a custom among the *Turks* (as *Pierius* teacheth at large) to cry out every morning from an high Tower, *God always was, and always will be*; and then to salute their *Mahomet*.

The

The *Sarazens* alſo uſed to call God a *Circle*. *Mercurius Triſmegiſtus*, whom I named before, the moſt memorable amongſt Philoſophers, (who wrote more Books than any mortal man beſide, if we may believe *Seleucus*, and *Meneceus*) ſaid that God was an intellectual *Sphere*, whoſe *Centre* is every where, and *Circumference* no where: becauſe Gods Majeſty and immenſity are terminated no where. For this cauſe the Ancients built unto their gods Temples for figure *round*. So *Numa Pompilius*, is ſaid to have conſecrated to *Veſta* a *round Table at Rome*. So *Auguſtus Cæſar*, in the name of *Agrippa*, dedicated to all the gods a *round Temple*, and called it *Pantheon*. Hereupon *Pythagoras*, to ſhew Gods *Eternity*, taught his Scholars to worſhip him, turning their bodies round about. And there was a ſtatute made by *Numa*, (as *Briſſonius* witneſſeth) that they which were about to worſhip God, ſhould turn themſelves round. Therefore God is according to the Antients, a *Circle*, but a *Circle* without a *Periphery* or *Circumference*, whoſe *Centre* is every where; becauſe God is the beginning and end of all things. Whereupon *Job* moſt juſtly cries out, *Beho'd, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be ſearched out.* *Job* 36. 26.

Again, they have represented *Eternity* by a *Sphere* and a *Globe*. Therefore *Faustina* the Empress had money stampt after this figure and superscription; There was a *Globe* on which the Empress sate stretching forth one hand, and holding in the other a *Scepter* with this Inscription, ETERNITY. Hence it was that many of the Antients thought the World to be *Eternal*, because it was *Round*, whom Saint *Basil* answers very fitly, *Let the world be a Circle; but the beginning of the Circle is the Centre.*

In the third place they have represented *Eternity* by a *Seat*: by which is signified *Eternal Rest*. The *Nasamones*, a certain people of *Africa*, for the most part did not only breath out their last sitting upon a Seat, but also desired to be buried after that position, as having then attained to *Eternity*, and a long cessation from all their labours: As in many places at this day Kings and Emperors are found sitting in Vaults under earth, in silence and mournful Majesty. And it was usual with the *Romans* to support with such like the molten statues of their deceased Emperors, as having then the fruition of *Eternity*. Some there are that thus reason with themselves oftentimes. Behold, I have been a long time held and oppressed with cares

cares and labours: But now why do I not take ſome reſpite? why do I not make ſome pauſe? why do I not reſt from my labours? I have laboured long enough: let others labour as much as I have done; for my part I'le reſt now, and take mine eaſe. So they ſet up their ſeats, and promiſe unto themſelves days of reſt: but (alas!) they are of no long continuance. They ſet up their ſeats, and embrace their eaſe; but neither in due time nor place. Oh! how truly and devoutly doth that golden Book, Of the Imitation of Chriſt, gives us a pull by the ear, in theſe words, *Diſpoſe and order all things according to thine own will, and the luſt of thine own eyes, and yet thou ſhalt never find, but thou ſhalt always ſuffer one thing, or other, either willingly or by conſtraint, and ſo thou ſhalt always find a Croſs.* The whole life of Chriſt was a Croſs, and Martyrdom; and doſt thou ſeek reſt and pleaſure? Therefore we muſt ſet up our ſeat in heaven, and not here, for here amongſt ſo many troubles it can never ſtand quiet; and though all other things ſhould ſpare, yet death at length will overturn. There is no true reſt to be hoped for, but that which is *Eternal*. But if there be any reſt in this life, this is it, For a man to com-

Kempis, lib. 1. c. 12.

mit himself, and all that is his to the will of God, to put his whole trust and confidence in him, and to account all other things beside, but vain. So are we taught in *Ecclesiasticus*; *Trust in God, and abide in thy place.* Without this rest of the soul all other things are meer troubles, a meer sea of tempestuous waves, and the very presence of Hell. But I return to the Antients.

Ecclus. 11. 21.

In the fourth place they have represented *Eternity* by the *Sun* and the *Moon*. The *Sun* reviveth every day, although it seems every day to die, and to be buried. It always riseth again, although every night it setteth. The *Moon* also hath her increase after every wane. *Catullus* hath pretty verses to this purpose.

In Hendecasyl.

The Sun *doth set: the* Sun *doth rise again.*
The day *doth close; the* day *doth break again.*
Once set our Sun, *again it riseth never:*
Once close our day *of life, it's* night *for ever.*

In Hell there is *Eternal night*, but without sleep. There they sleep not, because they slept here, where they should have watched; there they watch, because here they

they ſlept in their ſins; indeed not long, but longer they would if they could, yea *Eternally.* But it is far otherwiſe with thoſe that are in Heaven: For a perpetual light ſhall ſhine forth to the Saints, and *Eternity* of time, there is reſt; there is pleaſure after long labours and watchings.

In the fifth place, they have repreſented *Eternity* by the *Baſiliſk.* The *Baſiliſk* is the moſt venomous of all Creatures, and it alone of all others (as *Horus Niliacus* ſaith) cannot be killed by humane force; yea it is ſo virulent, that it killeth herbs with the very breath of it, that it puts to flight all other creatures with the hiſſing of it, and that it makes all birds ſuddenly ſilent upon the firſt preſence of it. *Ælianus* reports, that in the deſart of *Africa* a certain beaſt fell down being tired, and that the Serpents came together as it were to a feaſt, to devour the carcaſe, and that they preſently ran all away, and hid themſelves in the ſand, upon the ſight of the *Baſiliſk.* *Eternity*, whether of joy or of torment, cannot be ſhortned or diminiſhed, much leſs taken away or avoided. Neither is it ſtrange, if it affright all that are in their right wits, with the very thought of it. Infinite are the windings of this *Baſiliſk*; unmeaſurable and untwinable are the *Orbs* and *Circuits* of it. Oh Dragon

to

to be trembled at! Let us divert a little to our ſelves. It comes to paſs ſometimes when a man deſcends into himſelf, and rips up his Conſcience by confeſſion, that he finds many Serpents neſts, and whole broods of Vipers, and thereupon much marvelleth in himſelf, ſaying, Whence is there ſo much venome in my breaſt? Whence are ſo many fat Snakes, ſo many grievous and deadly ſins? Whence is there ſo great an hoſt of Lizards? Whence ſo many filthy and luſtful cogitations? I am afraid my ſelf at ſuch a numerous and peſtilent brood. But marvel not; we ſhall eaſily ſhew thee the cauſe thereof. A moiſt and a rude place is very apt to breed Serpents. Lo then, there is a double cauſe; the moiſture of the place, and the negligence of them that ſhould look to it. So it is in the Soul of man; if we ſpend all our care upon our body, handling it delicately, feeding it daintily, pampering it with feaſts, and effeminating it with pleaſures, it muſt needs be confeſſed that the ſoul, the inhabitant thereof, hath her dwelling in a moiſt place. Add hither ſlothfulneſs, and neglect of divine duties. Let no care be had at all of Salvation; ſo the body be ſound, and it goeth well with it, let no regard be had what happens to the Soul: let confeſſion of ſins be ſeldom made unto God,

God, and when it is, but in a negligent manner: what marvel then, if a multitude of Serpents and poyſonous vermine breed there? But (O good Chriſtian brother) let the *Baſiliſk* enter into thy breaſt, that is, the cogitation of *Eternity*, and thou ſhalt preſently perceive that theſe venomous beaſts will ſoon vaniſh away. Thou confeſſeſt that thy heart doth abound with theſe Snakes: It is a ſign therefore thou ſeldom thinkeſt upon *Eternity*. Amend therefore: and now at length begin to think upon this with thy ſelf, *That which delighteth is but Momentany, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.*

In the ſixth place, they have repreſented *Eternity* after this manner. There is a *vaſt den*, full of Horrors: round about which a *Serpent* winds it ſelf, and in the winding bites it ſelf by the tail. At the right hand of the den ſtands *a young man* of a beautiful and pleaſant countenance, holding in his right hand a *bow* and *two arrows*, and in his left hand an *Harp*. In the very entrance of the Den ſits an *old man* oppoſite, and having his eyes very intent upon his *Table-book*; according as the Cœleſtial Globe by its motion, or the young man ſtanding by, dictates unto him, ſo he writes. At the left hand of the den ſits a *grave matron*, gray-headed, and having her eyes always,

always busied. At the mouth of the den there are *four stairs*, each higher than other: The first is of *Iron*, the second of *Brass*, the third of *Silver*, and the fourth of *Gold*. On these are little children running up and down and playing, and never fear the danger of falling. This is the *Picture*: The meaning is this. The *Den* signifies the incomprehensibility of *Eternity*: The *Serpent* that twines it self about it, *Time*; The *Young-man*, *God*; in whose hand is *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Hell*. On *Earth*, and in *Hell* are the *Arrows* of the Lord fastened; but in *Heaven*, there is nothing but *Joy*, and the sound of the *Harp*. The *Old Man* is *Fate*, or rather, that which God hath *decreed* from all *Eternity*. The *Matron*, *Nature*: The *Stairs*, distinct *Times* and *Ages*: The *Children* running up and down the Stairs, do signifie things created, especially *Man*, who is sporting in matters of Salvation, and playing and jesting in the very entrance of *Eternity*. Alack, alack! O mortal men, we have played too long amidst these dangers; We are very near unto *Eternity*, even in the very entrance of it, whilest we live: Let but death lightly touch us, and we are presently swallowed up of *Eternity*. Death need not use any great power, or fight long against us; we are thrown down headlong in a moment,

and

and tumble down these stairs into the *Ocean* of *Eternity*. Bethink your selves well, you that play upon these stairs, and think upon any thing rather than upon *Eternity*; It may be *to day* or *to morrow* you may be translated from *Time* to *Eternity*.

CHAP. II.

The secret sense and meaning of Scripture is unfolded.

AFter the Chapter of the *Type* and *Picture* of *Eternity*, the holy Scripture of divine Truth shall not unfitly follow. When *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, had cast the three *Hebrew* children into the fiery furnace for refusing to obey his impious command, the flame is said to have ascended nine and forty cubits above the Furnace. A strange thing: But not without a Mystery. What? Did any man accurately measure the height thereof? Did any man ascend and apply unto it a rule, to take the just measure of it? was it just nine and forty cubits, neither more nor less? Why not fifty? For we use to number thus: Twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, though the number be somewhat more or less. Here in this place there wants but one of fifty. Surely there is a Mystery in it,

it, and some secret meaning. The number of fifty was wont to signifie the year of *Jubilee*. But the flames in the fiery furnace of Hell, although they rage both against body and soul, and infinitely exceed all the torments of this life, yet they shall never extend so far as the year of grace and *Jubilee*. In Hell there is no year of *Jubilee*, no pardon, no end of torments, *Now, now*, is the time of *Jubilee*; not every hundred or fifty years, but every hour and every moment. *Now* one part of an hour may obtain pardon here, which all *Eternity* cannot hereafter. *Now* is the time, that in one little and short day we may have more debts forgiven us, than in the fire of Hell in all years and times to come hereafter.

Let us add hither another explication of divine Scripture. When the people of God did pass over *Jordan, the waters which came down* toward the sea of the plain (which is now called the dead sea) failed until there was none left. And in *Ecclesiasticus* it is said, *There is that buyeth much for a little.*

Josh. 3. 16.

Eccl. 20. 12.

These two testimonies of Scripture *Galfrid* joyneth together, and thereupon discourseth thus. If *Eternal* bitterness be due unto thee, and thou maist escape

eſcape it by taſting of *Temporal*, certainly thou haſt redeemed *much for a little*. I confeſs, it is a Sea indeed in which thou ſaileſt, but yet a *dead ſea:* And how much art thou bound to give thanks unto God, who, whereas thou haſt deſerved to be overwhelmed in the ſalt, roaring and unnavigable ſea, hath of his great mercy toward thee, ſuffered thee rather to ſail in the *dead ſea*. (O bleſſed change!) that ſo by the *dead ſea* thou mayeſt paſs into the *land* of the *living*! This Writer compares all the adverſities of this *life* to the *dead ſea*, and *Eternal* puniſhment to the *ſalt* and *unchangeable ſea*. No man can eſcape them, he muſt needs fall into the one, or in the other. What doſt thou, O man? (cryes out Saint *Chryſoſtome*,) Art thou about to aſcend up to heaven, and doeſt thou ask me whether there be any difficulties by the way? Whatſoever we do, this *dead ſea* we muſt paſs over: we may, if we will, arrive at the haven of Tranquillity, and *Eternal* Happineſs.

The Word of God moſt high is the Fountain of wiſdom, and her wayes are everlaſting commandments. *Eccleſ.* 1. 5.

Through this dead ſea there is nó other way into the Region of the living: but the way of Gods commandments. We have a moſt clear place of Scripture for it:

If

Mat. 19. 17. *If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandements:* This is the only way to *Eternity.* If a man should ask a Divine of our times this question, *What is Eternity?* His answer will be, It is a *Circle* running back into it self, whose *Centre* is *Always*, and *Circumference No where*, that is, which never shall have end. *What is Eternity?* It is an *Orb* every way round, and like it self, in which there is neither beginning nor end. *What is Eternity?* It is a wheel,

Cornelius à Lapide.

Volvitur, & volvetur in omne volubilis ævum.

A wheel that turns, a wheel that turneth ever,
A wheel that turns, and will leave turning never.

What is Eternity? It is a *year* continually wheeling about, which returns again to the same point from whence it began, and still wheels about again. *What is Eternity?* It is an *ever-running fountain*, whither the water after many turnings flow back again, that they may always flow. *What is Eternity?* It is an *ever living spring*, from whence waters continually flow, either the most sweet waters of *Benediction* and blessing, or the most bitter waters of *Malediction* and cursing. *What is Eternity?* It is a

Laby-

Labyrinth which hath innumerable turnings and windings, which always lead them round that enter in, carrying them from turning to turning, and ſo loſing them. *What is Eternity?* It is a *pit without bottom*, whoſe turnings and revolutions are endleſs. *What is Eternity*, It is a *Spiral Line*, but without beginning; which hath Circles and windings one within another, but without ending. *What is Eternity?* It is a *Snake bowed back unto it ſelf* orbicularly, holding the tail in the mouth, which in its end doth again begin, and never ceaſeth to begin. *What is Eternity?* It is a *duration always preſent*, it is *one perpetual day*, which is not divided into that which is paſt, and that which is to come. *What is Eternity?* It is an *age of Ages*, as *Dionyſius* ſaith, never expiring, but always like it ſelf, without changing. *What is Eternity?* It is a beginning without beginning, middle, or end. It is a beginning, continuing, never ending, alway beginning. In which the Bleſſed alway begin a bleſſed life, and always abound with new pleaſures: in which the Damned always die, and after all death and ſtruggling with death, always begin again to die and ſtruggle with death. As long as God ſhall be God, ſo long ſhall the bleſſed be bleſſed, ſo long ſhall they reign

and

an triumph: so long shall the damned also fry in Hell, and yelling cry, *We are tormented in this flame*, being still to be tormented and tortured for ever.

CHAP. III.

Why the place of Eternity is called a Mansion.

JOHN, *Patriarch* of *Alexandria*, a very devout and godly man, was often wont to go to visit the sick, and took with him for his companion *Troilus* a Bishop, which had more care of his money than of the sick. The *Patriarch* whispereth him in the ear, and said, I pray thee, brother, let us help the friends of Christ. Whereupon *Troilus* like a crafty companion concealing the disease of his mind, to wit, his Covetousness, bad his Servants give to the poor all the money which at that time he had about him to buy other things withal. Not long after it happened that he fell into a Fever, which his Covetousness had caused: whereof the *Patriarch* of *Alexandria* hearing, and easily guessing at the cause of his disease, went to visit him, and carried with him as much silver, as he had not long before given to the sick: and after a little conference with him, he said thus,

thus, I did but jeſt with thee the other day, when I wiſhed thee to beſtow ſomething to the relief of the ſick; and it was becauſe my ſervant had not money about him. But behold here, in good earneſt I reſtore unto thee the money which thou laidſt out for my ſake, and I thank thee for it. When *Troilus* ſaw the money told, his Fever began to leave him, and his heat to abate, and in every part he found himſelf much better; whereupon finding himſelf gather ſtrength, he roſe up to dinner, and ſat down to Table. About noon-tide when dinner was ended, and the Table removed, he went to ſleep, and ſweetly took his eaſe, and dreamed that he ſaw a very ſtately Edifice, and in the *frontiſpiece* thereof over the gate, this inſcription, *Manſio Æterna & Requies Troili Epiſcopi*; In Engliſh thus, *The Eternal Manſion and Reſting place of Biſhop Troilus.* He was very much delighted with this dream. But not long after he had another Viſion that troubled him. For there came one with a company of workmen, and gave them a ſtrict charge, ſaying, Take away that Inſcription, and put this in the place there, *Manſio Æterna & Requies Johannis Archiepiſcopi Alexandriæ, empta libris triginta argenti:* In Engliſh thus, *The Eternal Manſion and Reſting*

Resting place of John Archbishop of Alexandria, which he bought for thirty pounds. With this Vision he was very much affrighted: but he made a very good use of it. For presently, of an hard and covetous man, he became liberal and charitable, especially to such as were in need. So much did the very dream of an *Eternal Mansion* prevail with him.

But oh ye rather blessed Mansions, and therefore blessed, because *Eternal*! Oh, how exceedingly doth Christ desire that we should loath and forsake these our tabernacles, and ruinous houses, and with earnest desire make hast unto those *Eternal Mansions*! *In my Fathers house*, saith he, *are many Mansions*, No man is kept back from thence but by himself. The place excludes no man: for it is exceeding large. Time shuts out no man: for there is a Mansion, and that Mansion is *Eternal.*

A Prayer.

O Eternal and merciful God, O Eternal Truth, *O true Love, O beloved Eternity; So cure our blindness, that by these present and short sorrows we may be brought to know, and so escape the future horrible*

horrible, and Eternal punishments. Direct us, and teach us so to possess things perishing and Temporal, that finally we lose not the things which are Eternal. Teach us so to lament for our sins committed, that we may escape Eternal punishments. Teach us so to behave our selves in the house of our pilgrimage, that we be not shut out of the Eternal Mansions. Teach us so to make our progress in the way, that at length we may be received into our Country.

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THE

The perpetuall hills did bowe.
His wayes are everlasting
Habac: 3.6.

The Salamander, the Basilisk, the Phenix,
the golden ring the fiery mountain, may
here upon earth put us in minde of ETER
NITIE: but onely blessed ETERNITIE can
make us eternall in heaven

THE SECOND CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

In what things Nature repreſenteth Eternity.

THE Idolaters themſelves therefore have acknowledged an *Eternity*, ſuch as it was, and have deſcribed it alſo by certain ſigns: For God hath manifeſted it unto them, *ſo that they are without excuſe.* How much dearer therefore, and in what great eſteem ought the conſideration thereof to be amongſt all Chriſtians, to whom *Eternity* is better repreſented, and in a more lively manner! *Therefore thou art inexcuſable, O man, whoſoever thou art*, that being often put in mind of *Eternity*, doth as often let it ſlip out of thy memory. Thou haſt often in thy ſight and before thine eyes, *Rings* and *Circles*, *Spheres* and *Globes*, *Sun* and *Moon*: If thou

Rom. 1. 20.

Rom. 2. 1.

lookest upon any of these, they will put thee in mind of *Eternity*. Nature her self like a good mother hath exposed them to publick view, that, when we see them, or hear of them, we might be invited to meditate upon *Eternity*.

Solinus reports that there is a stone in *Arcadia* called *Asbestos*, which being once set on fire doth continually burn: Wherefore in times past they were wont in Temples and Sepulchres to make lamps of it: of which St. *Augustine* maketh mention. I add that *Pliny*, *Volateranus*, *Dioscorides*, and many others tell strange wonders of a certain kind of *Line* or *Flax*, which is called by divers names: For some call it *Linum Asbestinum*, others *Carystium*, others *Indicum*, and others *Linum vivum*.

Lib. 21. *de Civit.* *cap* 5.

This is not only not consumed by fire, but also is purged and cleansed; wherefore the dead bodies of Kings heretofore, when they were to be put into the fire, and to be burned, used to be wrapped about with a Linnen cloth made thereof, to keep their ashes from confusion, and to distinguish them from others. Of such Flax *Nero* had a Towel, which he esteemed of more price than gold and precious stones. Behold, *Nature* her self, like a *Mistress* and Guide, leadeth

leadeth thee by the hand, and pointeth thee to a thing which the fire hath no power to consume. So shall all the damned burn, but never shall burn out. They shall always burn, but never be consumed; they shall seek for death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore justly doth one cry out, *O woe Eternal, that never shall have end! O end without end! O death more grievous than all death. Always to die, and never to be quite dead!* So saith divine *Isaiah*, *Their fire never shall be quenched:* And the Angel in the *Revelation*, *They shall desire to die: and death shall flee from them.*

In Horolog. sapien. Isa. 66. 24. Rev. 9. 6.

That the *Salamander* for a little time can indure, and live in the fire, beside *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, *Galen*, *Ælian*, *Dioscoridis*, S. *Augustine* also himself believed. This creature is very cold, and is generated of showers; the sun and drought are death to it; Therefore, according to *Pliny*, it endures in the flame like ice. Of the skin thereof lights are made for perpetual burning lamps God who made the *Salamander* of Earth and Clay, hath of his goodness formed man, though of the same matter, yet of a more excellent and noble nature. He hath *made him a little lower than the Angels. Psal.* 8. 4. He hath assigned un-

to him after this life the fellowſhip of the ſame Kingdom with the Angels. *But man being in honour had no underſtanding, and was compared unto the beaſts that Periſh, Pſal.* 49. 20. By his own malice he made himſelf ſuch a *Salamander*, that muſt always live or always die in *Eternal* flames. In thoſe fiery priſons of Hell, *all things are Eternal*; but theſe *ſix things eſpecially.*

CHAP. I.

What things are Eternal in Hell.

THE *damned* himſelf is *Eternal* and dyeth not. No man can make an end of himſelf, or another. *They ſhall ſeek death, and ſhall not find it, Rev.* 9. 6. Yea the very deſire of death, in as much as their deſire cannot be ſatisfied, ſhall greatly increaſe their torment.

2. *The Priſon* it ſelf is *Eternal*; It can never fall to ruin, it can never be broken down, it can never be digged through. It is barred up with rocks and mountains; The locks and bars are ſo firm and ſtrong, that none can get out If any of the damned ſhould by Gods permiſſion before the day of judgment come out from thence, yet ſtill he ſhould carry an Hell about him,

him, and never be free from torment.

3. *The fire* there is *Eternal.* Chriſt himſelf in *Matthew* ſaith as much expreſly; *Matth.* 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire,* or *fire Eternal.* Doſt thou hear this word, *Eternal*; The anger of the Lord doth kindle this fire, and it ſhall never be put out. To this beareth *Iſaiah* witneſs, ſaying, *The breath of the Lord like a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it,* it ſhall burn night and day, and *ſhall not be quenched, the ſmoke* thereof *ſhall aſcend up for ever and ever,* Iſaiah 30. 33. Iſaiah 66. 24. Rev. 14. 11. *Eternal punihments,* and *Eternal Life* are *Relates,* as St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaketh; and *Relates* are of like continuance: To ſay therefore, that *Eternal Life* ſhall be without end, and *Eternal puniſhment* ſhall have an end, is very abſurd. Who therefore will defer his converſion? *Lib.* 12. *de Civ. c.* 23.

4. As the things mentioned before are *Eternal,* ſo is the *Worm,* and conſcience tormented with deep deſpair for the life paſt, Iſa. 66. 24. *Their worm ſhall not die*: So propheſied *Iſaiah.* The Poets of old tranſlated this out of Holy writ into their fables: For what is that *Tityus,* of whom *Virgil* feigneth, That a flying *Vultur* every day gnaws and tears his *Liver,* which is

every night again repaired and made up, that every day the *Vulture* may have more prey to gnaw upon? What is the *Vulture* but the *Worm* we speak of? And what is the *Liver*, but the *Conscience* always gnawn, and tormented?

5 To this *Eternity* of Hell belongeth also the *last sentence*, and the *last Decree* pronounced by Christ the Judge: A decree (Alas!) irrevocable, immutable, *Eternal*. There is no *Appealing* from it; If the sentence be once pronounced by the mouth of this Judge, it stands irrevocable for all *Eternity*. In Hell there is no redemption, not any, no not any; but *Eternal* desperation. The blood of Christ when it was newly poured out on the mount of *Golgotha*, though of infinite efficacy for satisfaction, yet reacheth not unto the damned. *If the yoke of the Lord*, saith Saint *Bernard*, *be a yoke of Repentance, you think that in it self it is not sweet: But this you must know, That it is most sweet, if it be compared with that fire of which it is said, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* Mat. 25. 41.

6. The *Punishment* or *Pain of loss* also, as they call it, is *Eternal*, being the privation of the sight of God for ever, which together with all the other torments of the damned shall never have end: because there

there can be no place for ſatisfaction. For although theſe torments ſhall continue infinite millions of years, yet there ſhall not one day, no nor one hour, no nor ſo much as a moment of reſt and reſpite be granted. There ſhall be viciſſitude and variety of torments, but to their greater pain and grief. Chriſt often foretold it by *Matthew* in plain words, *Mat.* 8. 12. *The children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt out into utter darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth: weeping*, for heat; and *gnaſhing of teeth*, for cold. How then can man be ſo forgetful of himſelf and God? How can he ſo degenerate into a beaſt? Yea rather, how can he become like a rock, or a ſtone, ſo ſenſeleſs, as when he ſhall think upon the unſufferable and unutterable torments of Hell, which never ſhall have end, then not to fear and tremble, and ſay with himſelf thus, I am for certain in the way to *Eternity*, and I know not how ſoon I may come to my journeys end: I ſit on the ſtairs of *Eternity*, and every little thruſt is ready to plunge me into the bottomleſs pit? But if it ſeem ſo grievous and intolerable for a man to lye, though but for one night, on a ſoft feather-bed, and never ſleep or cloſe his eyes, but to ſigh and groan for pain in his head, or any other member for the

tooth-ach, or for the stone: If the night seems long, and the day a great way off, and the Sun to slack his coming: And yet, as I said, he lies upon a good feather-bed, and if he will have but a little patience, he may hope to find ease in the day, and help from the Physician, Alack! Alack, how intolerable shall it be to lie night and day in the fire, for a thousand and a thousand, and again, I say, a thousand years! How intolerable shall it be, there to watch, to hunger, to thirst, to burn, to be tormented extreamly in every part, and not to hope for any rest, or so much as a drop of cold water; but to be always in despair, and so to fry and to be tortured for infinite millions of ages, and to be so far from finding any end, as never to be able to hope for any end! There, saith *Thomas*, one hours punishment shall be more grievous, than an hundred years here in the most bitter punishment that can be. There is no rest, no consolation to the damned. Psal. 6. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* Psal. 25. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.* Unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish. *De Christ. imitat. lib.* 1. *cap.* 24.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Why Hell is Eternal.

HEre ariſeth a queſtion, which is worthy to be known of all men, How it can be, that God, who is good and merciful, and whoſe mercy is over all his works, ſhould notwithſtanding puniſh even one mortal ſin, committed, it may be, in a moment, and in thought only; how he ſhould puniſh ſuch a ſin, I ſay, for all *Eternity*; and ſo puniſh it, that it ſhall deſerve ſtill always to be puniſhed: and though millions of years be paſſed, yet it ſhall never be ſaid, This ſin hath been ſufficiently puniſhed, it is enough, he hath made ſatisfaction for the wicked thought, by which he hath offended God.

What then? Hath God for one ſin, and that in thought only, decreed the puniſhment of everlaſting fire? What equality is there in this, for a *momentary* ſin, to appoint an *Eternal* puniſhment; Why doth bleſſed *David* cry out, *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever*! Pſal. 106. 1. 107. 1. 118. 1. 136. 1. and why doth he repeat it twenty ſeven times, if God be ſo ſevere? To this S. *Auguſtin*, *Gregory*, *Thomas Aquinas*, and others anſwer, That in every

mortal sin the offence of its own nature is infinite, because it is an injury against the infinite Majesty of God. Again, He that dyeth guilty of a mortal sin without repentance, doth as much as if he should sin *Eternally*: For if he might live *Eternally*, he would sin *Eternally*: He hath not lost a will to sin, but life in which to sin, still being ready to sin, if he might live still; So he doth not cease to sin, but doth cease to live. Further it is to be considered, That a damned Person can never make satisfaction, though he should pay never so much; For being an enemy, and not in favour with God, his payment is not worthy acceptation; seeing that he himself is not accepted with him. Neither indeed, to speak truly, can he be said to pay any thing; because he doth nothing, but suffers only punishment, and that against his will. We will make the matter yet more plain by a familiar example. Suppose a man should borrow of his neighbour a thousand Crowns, and for the use thereof make over the rent of his house unto him for ever. It may be in twenty years he may thus repay the sum of money borrowed; But what then? Is he fully discharged of all the debt? Doth there remain nothing to be paid? The principal remains still as due to be paid,

as

as if there had been nothing at all paid. For this is the nature of such lones, that although the yearly use be paid, still the principal remains entire, & due to be paid. So it is with the damned; For although they should pay never so much; yet they can never get out of debt, They are debtors still, and ever shall be *Isa.* 1. 31. *The strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark; they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.*

Suttonius reports of *Tiberius Cæsar*, that being Petitioned unto by a certain offender to hasten his punishment, and to grant him a speedy dispatch, he made him this answer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay Sir, *You and I are not yet friends.* Christ is a most just Judge, no Tyrant, no *Tiberius.* And yet if one of the damned after a thousand years burning in Hell should beg and intreat for a speedy death, he would answer after the same manner, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* If after a thousand years more he should ask the same thing, he should receive the same answer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* If after an hundred thousand years yet more, yea millions of years, he should ask again, again, he *Suet. lib. 3. cap. 6.*

he ſhould receive the ſame anſwer, *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* The time was, I offered to be thy *friend*; but thou wouldſt not; yea, thy *father*, but thou wouldſt not. I offered thee my grace a thouſand and a thouſand times; but thou rejectedſt it. This I knew right well, and I held my peace, and further expected, forty, fifty, ſixty years, to ſee if thou wouldſt change thy mind, and courſe of life. But there followed no ſerious or true repentance. *Thou haſt ſet at nought all my counſil, and wouldeſt none of my reproof. Thou haſt hated inſtruction, and haſt caſt my words behind thee,* Prov. 1. 25. Pſal. 50. 17. Eat therefore the fruit of thine own ways, and be filled with thy own counſels. Prov. 1. 26. *I will laugh* at thy deſtruction for ever: neither ſhall my juſtice after infinite ages give thee any anſwer but this. *Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*, Stay, *You and I are not yet friends.* O God which art in heaven! O ſin which throweſt men headlong into hel, the hell of torments, and into the bottomleſs pit of *Eternal* pain! But *righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.* Pſal. 119. 137. Juſt and right it is, that he which would not by repentance accept of mercy when it was offered, ſhould by puniſhment be tormented, and

and have juſtice without mercy for ever.

CHAP. III.

Other motives to the conſideration of Eternity, drawn from Nature.

BUT I return to the School of *Nature*, to conſider further upon *Eternity*. There are found *hot Baths* in certain Mountains and Rocks, whoſe waters in running make ſuch a noiſe and murmuring, that the diſeaſed perſons that reſort thither for cure, if at that entrance into the *Bath*, they do but imagine they hear muſical Inſtruments, and an harmonious conſort, they have their ears ſo dulled with the continual noiſe thereof, that the muſick which at firſt was ſweet unto them, becomes at length, by their imagination working upon it, very loathſome, and a torment unto them: But if they imagine they hear a Drum, or any other loud ſounding inſtrument, they at length grow almoſt mad with the noiſe thereof daily moleſting & troubling them. From whence alſo we are led, as it were by the hand, to the conſideration of *Eternity*. The weeping and wailing, yelling and crying which is heard at the firſt entrance of Hells mouth under thoſe infernal

mountains ſhall never ceaſe, but ſhall torment the damned without end, and be no whit mitigated by time and long-ſufferance. But on the contrary the Bleſſed in Heaven ſhall without wearineſs hear the *Thrice Holy* ſung, *Holy, Holy, Holy*; yea, and the more they hear it, the more they ſhall be delighted with the ſound thereof. Chriſt in his Conference with the Woman of *Samaria*, makes often mention of *Eternity*, and life everlaſting. *Whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt: But the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water, ſpringing up unto everlaſting life*, John 4. 14. I would we did thirſt with the woman of *Samaria* after thoſe waters, and earneſtly pray for them: *O Lord, give me of this water, that I thirſt not*, John 4. 15. Give me, O Chriſt, though but *a drop* of this water, that is, *ſome thirſt* and deſire after *Eternal* life. In the year after the Nativity of our Lord fourſcore and one (as *Suetonius*, *Dion*, and *Plinius Secundus* tell at large) on the firſt day of *November*, about ſeven of the clock, at the mountain *Veſuvius* in *Campania*, there was an horrible eruption of fire, before which there went an unuſual drought, and grievous earthquakes. There was alſo heard noiſe under earth, as if it had been thunder. The ſea roared and made

made a noiſe; the heaven thundered as if mountains had in conflict met together; great ſtones were ſeen to fall; the air was filled with ſmoak and fire mixt together; the Sun did hide his head. Whereupon it was thought by many that the world was almoſt at an end, and that the laſt day was come, wherein all ſhould be conſumed with fire: For there was ſuch abundance of aſhes ſcattered up and down over land and ſea, and in the air, that there was much hurt done amongſt men and cattle, and in the fields, that fiſh and fowl were deſtroyed, that two cities, the name of the one was *Herculanum*, and the name of the other *Pompeii*, were utterly ruined. Theſe and ſuch other like *Caverns* in the earth, with *Preciſices* and *fiery mountains* always flaming, but never going out, are lively examples given us by God, to put us in mind of the fire of Hell, in which the bodies of the curſed ſhall be always burning, but never be burnt out. Concerning this you may read *Tertullian*, *Minutius*, and *Pacian*. See, O man, how providently even Nature her ſelf doth go before thee, and as it were lead thee by the hand to the contemplation of *Eternity*.

*Tertul. Apol. c.*48. *Minut. in oct. Pacian. De pœnitent. & confeſſ.*

To

To conclude, this *Time* of ours carrieth with it some sign and print of *Eternity*. Nature fain would have us learn the thing signified by the sign, and take a scantling of *Eternity* by the little *module* and measure of time. It is the saying of St. *Augustine*, *This is the difference* between things *Temporal* and *Eternal*: We love things *Temporal* more before we have them, and esteem them not so much when we have them: for the soul cannot be satisfied but with true and secure *Eternity*, and joy which is *Eternal* and incorruptible. But things *Eternal*, when they are actually *possessed*, are much more loved than before when they were only desired and hoped for: For neither could *Faith* believe, nor *Hope* expect so much as *Charity* and *Love* shall find when once we shall be admitted to possession. Why then doth not earth seem vile in our eyes, especially when we must er'e long forsake it? And why do we not with ardent desire lift up our eyes to Heaven where we shall inherit a Kingdom, and that *Eternal*.

In Sent. sen. 270.

THE

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Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Dan: 5 27

That man regardeth not ETERNITIE who weigheth his money more accurately then his life

THE THIRD CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

Wherein the old Romans principally placed their Eternity.

PLinius Secundus thought those men happy, which either did things worthy to be wrote, or wrote things worthy to be read; but those men of all most happy, which could do both. So the *Romans* thought they might three manner of ways eternize their fame, and transmit their names unto posterity. First they wrote many excellent things; *many* excellent indeed, but *not all*, not all chast, not all holy: They committed to writing their own blemishes, their dishonest loves, and filthy lusts; But this was no honest or Kings high way to *Eternity*. How many books have died before their Authors, and according to *Plato*, have been like unto the Gardens *Epist.* 2. *ad Tat.*

dens of *Adonis*: as soon dead as sprung up! They pleased not long which quickly pleased. But suppose the books of all the *Romans* should out-live time, and be always extant, and exposed to publick view, yet they should not be able to give life unto their Authors.

Again, the *Romans* did not only write, but also did many brave works worthy to be recorded by the pens of eloquent and learned men, and these works were of divers kinds. They sought *Eternity* in many things, but found it in nothing, as we are taught to believe. They were great (we do not deny it) in civil and warlike affairs, at home and abroad: admirable for their skill in Arts and Sciences: Magnificent and profuse in setting forth shews, and bestowing gifts: wonderful even to astonishment for stately Buildings, Tombs, Vaults, Monuments and Statues, as you may guess by these few particulars, which I will briefly run over.

Augustus, in his own name, and at his own proper charges, set forth Plays and Games four and twenty times, and at the charge of the common Treasury, three and twenty times: and never a one of those cost him under two Millions and five Hundred Thousand Crowns; and this so great a sum of money, I say, was all laid out upon

upon one ſhew. The very meaneſt and cheapeſt that ever *Auguſtus* ſet forth, came to a Million two Hundred and fifty Thouſand Crowns.

Nero guilded over the whole *Theatre*; the Ornaments of the tyring houſe and Comical implements he made all of gold: To theſe you may add ſquare pieces of wood or wooden Lots ſcattered amongſt the people, which had for their Inſcriptions, whole houſes, fields, grounds, farms, ſlaves, ſervants, beaſts, great ſums of ſilver, and many times jewels a great number: To whoſoevers lot fell any one of theſe, he preſently received according to the inſcription.

The ſame *Nero* for a Donative to a common ſoldier, commanded to be told two hundred and fifty thouſand crowns.

Agrippina (*Nero*'s mother) cauſed the like ſum of money to be laid upon a Table, thereby ſecretly reprehending and labouring to reſtrain her ſons profuſeneſs. Whereupon *Nero* perceiving that he was toucht, commanded another ſum to be added as great as the former, and ſaid thus, *Neſciebam me tam parum dediſſe, I forgot my ſelf in giving ſo little.*

The ſame *Nero* entertained at *Rome* for nine moneths together King *Tiridates*, and was every day at coſt for him twenty thouſand

ſand Crowns, which came in nine months to five millions and forty thouſand Crowns. And at his departure he gave him for a *Viaticum*, or to ſpend by the way, two millions and an half. What ſhould I tell you of their ſtately and magnificent buildings?

Caligula the Emperour made a bridge over an Arm of the Sea, three Miles long.

There were Temples in *Rome* four hundred twenty four, moſt of them were magnificent.

Domitian ſpent upon the ſole guilding of the Capitol, ſeven millions.

On the ſtairs of the *Amphitheater*, which were made all of ſtone, there might ſit very conveniently, fourſcore and ſeven thouſand ſpectators; above, there might ſtand round about twelve thouſand. In all fourſcore and nineteen thouſand.

Beſides many others, there were twelve publick Baths made by the Emperor, where men might bathe *gratis*.

In the hot Bathes of *Antoninus*, there were of poliſhed ſtone one thouſand and ſix hundred ſeats, and there might ſo many men bathe themſelves very conveniently.

In the Bath of *Hetruſcus*, as *Pliny* ſaith, all was of ſilver, the paſſages for the water,

ter, the lips of the Bath, and the very floor it ſelf. But I paſs to other things.

At *Rome* there were almoſt as many Statues as men, of no worſe matter than ſilver and gold, beſide infinite others of Braſs, Marble, and Ivory.

Domitian had one of Gold in the Capitol, of an hundred pound weight.

Commodus and *Claudius* had alſo Statues of Gold, each of them being of a thouſand pound weight. *Claudius* had alſo in the place at *Rome* called *Roſtra*, another of Silver. Hereupon there was a certain Officer appointed, who was called the Count of *Rome*, on whom there attended a great many ſoldiers continually to guard and look to the great number of Statues.

The way which is called *Appia*, will exerciſe a nimble footman five days in running it over. It reached in length, from *Rome* to *Capua*; ſo broad, that two Coaches might meet, and never trouble one another; ſo ſolid and firm, as if it were all of one ſtone, in no place looſe or broken up. There were alſo more ways like unto this. It is incredible what good Authors do write of their Conduits and Aquæducts.

Claudius the Emperour beſtowed about one, ſeven Millions of Gold and a half; and there were maintained ſix hundred men with the only keeping and looking to the

the waters. Theſe were great works indeed, but the Authors thereof in part deſerved reprehenſion for their immoderate profuſeneſs. There was at *Rome* one thing that ſurpaſſed their ſtately buildings, but (as for name, to ſay no worſe, and to ſpare your ears) diſhonourable, and not fit to be named. They had certain Vaults under earth built with arches, you may call them the ſinks of the City (they called them *Cloacas*) running with water, to carry away all the filth of the City. Of theſe there were ſo many, ſo large, and ſo long, that you may well reckon them amongſt the wonders of the world. I need not inſtance any more: theſe which I have named are ſufficient. He that is any thing converſant in Hiſtories, or hath heard of the great power and wealth of the *Romans* in former ages, will eaſily believe my relation: if he will not believe me, let him believe the teſtimony of *Suetonius*, *Dion*, *Caſſius*, *Pliny*, *Livy*, and others that have wrote of the *Roman* monuments.

Theſe things which I have reckoned up, are very laudable in themſelves. But they governed their Commonwealth ſo prudently, that in war for the moſt part they were unconquerable, for Arts and Sciences excellent, for Virtue illuſtrious; in-

inſomuch, that *Cyneas* an Ambaſſador ſent from *Pyrrhus*, a very eloquent and intelligent man, when he had all in vain ſolicited the City to make a League with his Lord and Maſter, which League could not ſtand with the honour of the *Romans*, upon his return told the King, That he thought the *City* to be a *Temple*, and all the *Senators*, *Kings*. Herein the *Romans* were highly to be commended: but in this they were much overſeen (though otherwiſe very prudent men) in placing their *Eternity* in ſuch things as neither could give unto them nor had in themſelves *Eternity*. If the *Romans* had made choice of Saint *Auguſtine* for their guide in the way to *Eternity*, he would have ſhewed them a more certain and readier way. For what ſaith he? *We do not account thoſe Emperours happy which have reigned long, or which have often triumphed as Conquerors over their Enemies, or which have treaſured up much wealth. Theſe things often happen to thoſe that have no right or title to the Kingdom which is Eternal.* Who then in Saint *Auguſtines* opinion are to be accounted truly happy? Hearken, O ye Emperours, O ye Kings and Princes: You ſhall in Saint *Auguſtines ſenſe* obtain true and *Eternal* happineſs, by the obſervation of theſe Rules following.

1. The Rule of *Justice*. By ruling justly, and hating the very vizard and painted face of injustice.

2. The Rule of *Modesty*. By not being puffed up by the vain applauses, acclamations and titles of honour, but by remembring your selves to be but men.

3. The Rule of the *Fear* and *Love of God*. By propagating by all means the true Worship of God; by subjecting all humane power to his Divine Majesty; by serving him in *fear* and *love*.

4. The *Desire of Heaven*. By setting your love and affection upon the Kingdom which is *Eternal*, where one shall not envy anothers power.

5. The Rule of *Facility*, and *readiness to forgive*. By being swift to forgive, and slow to punish, but when the glory of God, and the necessity of the Commonwealth calleth for it.

6. *Mercy* and *Liberality*. By tempering the severity of the Laws by the Oyl of Mercy, and the sweet odour of beneficency.

7. *Continency*. By not giving the reins to Luxury, but by bridling your appetites and concupiscences; and the more liberty you have, the less abusing it unto licentiousness.

8. *Moderation of Passions*. By choosing rather

rather to get the conqueſt over evil Paſſions, than by domineering over Nations.

9. The ſtudy of *Humility* and *Prayer*. By doing all theſe, not for vain-glory, but for the glory of God, and the attainment of *Eternal* felicity: and again, by never neglecting that moſt noble ſacrifice of *Humility* and *Prayer*.

Theſe Rules or Laws hath Saint *Auguſtine* fixed upon the double gates of the world, are a glaſs fit for Princes to look into. But, O ye *Romans*, how far have ye gone aſtray from the way that leadeth unto the gates whereon theſe Laws are fixed! Not to ſpeak of other things, you have inſtead of one and the only true God, brought in innumerable others, to worſhip them which are no Gods. For *Rome* ſeemed to make it a great matter of Religion, to refuſe no falſity; and when ſhe ruleſt almoſt over all nations, to ſerve and follow the errors of all Nations.

But to let theſe things paſs alſo: how vain and ridiculous a thing is it for them, to leave behind them all their *Eternity* in Parchments and Papers, in Marble and other Stone, in Theaters and Pyramids, in Monuments and Tombs! What is now become of their *Eternity* which was ſometime carved in Stone? The ſame hath

hapned unto *Rome*, which alſo befell *Jeruſalem*. The Diſciples pointing at the buildings of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, ſaid unto our Saviour Chriſt, *Maſter, See what manner of Stones, and what buildings are here*! Mark 13. 1. Whereupon Chriſt anſwered and ſaid, *See ye all theſe buildings? Verily I ſay unto you, there ſhall not be left here one ſtone upon another, that ſhall not be thrown down*, Matth. 24. 2. So there is nothing *Eternal* in this world. And where is now old *Rome*? If this queſtion be demanded: the anſwer may be this, *Here it was.* Where are they that built it? *They are dead and gone.* There is not ſo much as their aſhes left of them. And ere long we muſt all go the ſame way, become like a ſhadow, return unto duſt, and be reſolved into nothing. Oh the poor and mean condition of morral men, even at the greateſt! Oh the inſtability and frailty of the ſtrongeſt men, even in the prime of all their ſtrength! For what is now become of all thoſe things, or where are they? *they are quite vaniſhed away.* Where is their money, which they heaped up beyond belief? *'tis ſcattered abroad.* Where are their ſtately and lofty buildings? *they are not to be ſeen.* Such are all things elſe, though to us they ſeem never ſo great, nothing elſe but a meer ſhadow, and a dream,

if

if they be compared with *Eternity*, and thoſe things which are *Eternal*. The foundation on which the whole fabrick of vaniſhing glory is ſet up, is too weak and mouldering, and made but of Clay, Stone and Marble cannot be ingraven with Characters and Inſcriptions of *Eternity*. Well ſaith *Lactantius*, *The works of mortal men are mortal.* That there was a *Babylon*, a *Troy*, a *Carthage*, and a *Rome*, we believe: But if we will believe no more than we ſee, there be ſcarce any reliques or ruinous parts of them remaining, to perſwade us that there were ſuch Cities. So the ſeven wonders of the world, ſo *Nero*'s golden Palace, *Diocletian*'s hot Baths, *Antonius* his Baths, *Severus* his Septizonium, *Julius* his Coloſſus, *Pompey*'s Amphitheater, have no footſtep or print of them remaining; no, ſcarce upon record, or regiſtred in Books. And how far have all of theſe come ſhort of *Eternity*.

CHAP. I.

How far the Romans have gone aſtray from the true way of Eternity.

AT *Nazareth*, in a certain Conclave, called by the name of the bleſſed Virgin, there is in one place mention made

of a Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*, Luk. 1.33. Such was not the Kingdom of *Solomon*: for that lasted but four hundred years, even to the Captivity of *Babylon*. Such was not the Kingdom of the *Romans*, neither of the *Persians*, nor yet of the *Gresians*. For where are now those Kingdoms in former times most flourishing? Where are those most ancient Monarchies; How great was *Nebuchadnezzar* in *Chaldea* and *Syria*, and after him *Belhazzar*? From them the Scepter was translated unto the *Medes* and *Persians*, to *Cyrus* and *Darius*. Neither continued it there long. From thence it was translated into *Greece*, to *Alexander*, surnamed the *Great*, King of *Macedon*, for a long time most victorious and fortunate. But as warlike valour decayed, so fortune failed. And so the Scepter was translated into *Italy* to *Julius Cæsar*, and *Octavianus Augustus*. What is become of all these Kings? Where are they? But thou, O Christian man, seek that Kingdom, *Of which Kingdom there shall be no end*. *Numanthia*, *Athens*, *Carthage*, and *Sparta*, all are come to an end, they are utterly perished. But as for the Kingdom which is above, *Of that there shall be no end*. The King that ruleth there is *Eternal*, and those that live in that Kingdom are *Eternal*. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*, Exod. 15.14. On which words,

words, ſaith *Origen*, *Doſt thou think that the Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever? Yea, he ſhall reign for ever and ever, and beyond that too.* Say what thou canſt, thon ſhalt ſtill come ſhort of the duration of his Kingdom: the Prophet will ſtill add ſomthing; as for example, after *for ever*, yet more, *and ever*, or, *beyond that too.* And yet, ſaith I*dore*, though this Kingdom be *Eternal*, though infinite, though every way bleſſed, though it be promiſed to us, not a word of that. For what man is there of a thouſand that ſpends the leaſt part of a day in meditating upon that? that ever once makes mention of that? that ever inſtructs his wife, his children, and his ſervants concerning that? We prattle much of all other things: but as for heaven there is ſcarce any mention made of that; or if there be, ſurely it is very rare. In ſetting forth the commendation of his own Country, every man is a nimble-tongued Orator: But as for that which is our true Country indeed, we bluſh and are almoſt aſhamed, being too modeſt in commending that. For it is come to paſs in theſe days, by the diſuſe of holy conference, that men think themſelves not witty nor facete enough, unleſs they ſpeak idle and unprofitable words, and make fool ſh jeſts: nay that is not all, unleſs their

cheeks ſwell, and their lips run over with filthy and unſavoury ſpeeches. Oh! This is to go aſtray quite out of the way. But let our hearts and mouths be filled with the praiſe and deſire of things *Eternal*; let our thoughts and words always run after them: we have no other way to true glory, but this; and there is no true glory, but that which is *Eternal*.

The chief Prieſts and the Phariſees amongſt the Jews, to overthrow Chriſts power (as they thought) and to eternize their politick Government, aſſembled themſelves together in Councel: and by their fooliſh wiſdom (as it proved) made Decrees to their own hurt. Elegantly ſpeaketh S. *Auguſtine* of them, Conſulting and Deliberating together in full Court: The chief Prieſts, ſaith he, and the Phariſees took counſel together what they ſhould do for their own good, and yet they ſaid not, *Let us believe*. The wicked and ungodly men ſought more how to hurt and to deſtroy, than how to provide for their own ſecurity, that they might be ſaved. And yet they were in fear and in counſel: For they ſaid, *What do we? For this man doth many Miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him. And the Romans ſhall come, and take away both our Place and Nation.*

Auguſt.

Nation, Joh. 11. 47, 48. They were afraid to loſe things *Temporal*, and never thought upon the life which is *Eternal*: and ſo they loſt both. Such is the vanity, and affected mockery of our fooliſh cogitations. What are we? and what is all that we call ours? *To day* we flouriſh like a flower, we are well ſpoken of, we pleaſe, and are in favour with men: But (alas!) *to morrow* our flower will fade, we ſhall be ill ſpoken of, and out of favour with God and man: man, whom hitherto we pleaſed; and God, whom we never ſtudied for to pleaſe. We neglect Heaven, and keep not earth: We get not the favour of God, and loſe the worlds favour. And ſo we are moſt deplorately miſerable, and deſtitute on both ſides. If death would but ſpare thoſe that are the happy ones of this world, it may be they might find here ſome glory: ſome, I ſay, ſuch as it is; for there is none true but that which is in heaven, and *Eternal*. But (alas!) death ſpares no man; ſees in the dark, and is not ſeen; and watches his time when he may ſet upon us, when we think not of him. What ſhall become of us? whither will he carry us, if here we have lived wickedly? To the bar of Chriſts judgment, and from thence to the pit of Hell: and from thence there is no re-

demption. Nobility from thence sets no man free: Power delivers no man. The applause of men formerly given, yields there no comfort. Let us here seek the favour of God and his glory. That is the true glory which is got by the shunning of vain glory: and there is no true glory but that which is *Eternal*.

Prov. 3. 13. *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* describeth *Wisdom* like a Queen, attended by two waiting-maids, *Eternity* and *Glory*; the first on the right hand, the second on the left. *Glory* is nothing worth, if there be not joyned with it *Eternity*; that which all we Christians do expect. *For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come, Eternal in the heavens. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance*, Heb. 13. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Psal. 112. 6. To give an almes to a poor man, to moderate a greedy appetite, to resist an enemy of chastity, these are works that require not much pains, or time for the doing: and yet the remembrance of these, together with their reward, shall be *Eternal*. What a small thing was it that *Mary Magdalene* bestowed upon our Saviours feet! How quickly had she done it! And yet it is made known *throughout the whole world*, Matth. 26. 13. Some others, it may be, would have admired

mired other things in her, her cherry cheeks, her comely countenance, the pleaſant flower of her youth, her rare grace, her great riches, her affability and courteſie, and ſuch like. Theſe were not the things which Chriſt commends in her; but it was the office which ſhe performed unto his feet. The thing it ſelf was not great: and yet it was a means to procure for her *Eternal* glory, and a never dying name. *It ſhall be preached throughout the whole world*: This is the Teſtimony of Chriſt. This work of hers was not engraven in marble, nor caſt in braſs, nor promulged in the Market place, nor proclaimed with a Drum and a Trumpet: and yet it hath continued for a memorial of her to this day, and ſo ſhall for ever, and *It ſhall be preached throughout the whole world.* If you conſider the *Action* it ſelf, *Judas Iſcariot* the covetous Purſe-bearer found fault with it: *Simon* the ſwelling and proud Phariſee condemned it: If the *matter*, it was but an Ointment, at the moſt not worth above thirty ſmall pieces of gold: If the *place*; it was private: If the *witneſſes* preſent; they were but few: If the *perſon*; ſhe was a woman, and one infamous: And yet for all theſe, *It ſhall be preached throughout the whole world.* How many Emperors have advanced their

Colours,

Colours displayed, their victorious and triumphant Eagles, and set up their Standards in their Enemies Camp! How many warlike Captains have led popular Armies, and commanded them worthily! How many provident Governours have ruled their people very wisely! How many Kings have erected rare Monuments, and Statues, and built Castles and Cities! How many learned men have wasted their brains in new Inventions, and have like *Chymicks*, distilled them into *Receivers* of Paper! And to what end all this? To keep their names in continual remembrance, and to be recorded amongst worthy and memorable men. And yet notwithstanding they lodge in the bed of silence, and lie buried in the grave of oblivion. But one good work that the righteous doth, shall be had in everlasting remembrance: Time and envy shall never deface and conceal it; the wisest men, Captains, Prelates, and Kings themselves, shall with reverence read and hear it. *It shall be preached throughout the whole world.*

The only way then to immortality and true *Eternity* is, to live well, and so to die well. Go to now, ye *Romans*, if ye will seek *Eternity* in Statues and Marble monuments: but you shall never find it there. I

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for my part will wiſh rather with St. *Hierome*, in the life of *Paul* the *Eremite*, Oh remember, ſaith he, *Hierome* a ſinner, who if God had given him the choice, would have preferred the poor cloak of *Paul* with his good works before the Scarlet robes of Kings with their Kingdoms. Let us Chriſtians here, whileſt we have time, make over our riches; for fear leſt we loſe them, let us ſend them before us into another world: Heaven ſtands open, ready to receive them. We need not doubt of the ſafe carriage: the Carriers are very faithful and truſty; but they are the poor and needy of this world. We make over unto them here by way of exchange a few things of little value, being to receive in heaven an *exceeding Eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. For ſo hath Chriſt promiſed upon the performance of this precept. *I ſay unto you, Make to your ſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs: that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations.* But let us paſs from the *Romans* unto others.

CHAP.

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CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A better way than the former which the Romans followed to Eternity.

Darius the King of the *Perſians*, moſt notable for his ſlaughter, had in his Army ten thouſand *Perſians*, which he therefore called immortal (as *Cælius Rhodiginus* interpreteth it) not becauſe he thought they ſhould never die, (for where are there any ſuch?) but becauſe as any of the number was diminiſhed by ſword or ſickneſs, it was preſently made up; ſo that ſtill there was neither more nor leſs than ten thouſand. Thus *Darius* framed unto himſelf a kind of immortality and *Eternity*: But (alas!) it was a very ſhort one; for within a little ſpace, he and all his Army utterly periſhed. *The Preſidents and Princes aſſembled together unto Darius, and ſaid thus unto him, King Darius, Live for ever*, Dan. 6. 6. Alas, How vain was this wiſh, and how ſhort this *Eternity*? We live but ſeventy or eighty years at the moſt: we are but in a dream, if we think to live here for ever. Not without cauſe therefore *Xerxes*, (when for the conquering and ſubjugating

Cæl. Rhodigin. lib. 8. *cap.* 2. *& l.* 25. *cap.* 1.

Greece

Greece (as *Herodotus* reports) he carried with him out of *Aſia* two great Armies both by Sea and Land (in number three and twenty hundred thouſand, ſeventeen thouſand, and ſix hundred, beſides others that attended upon Souldiers) upon a day taking his proſpect from a Mountain, and beholding his Souldiers, fell a weeping: and being asked the reaſon why, He ſaid it was, becauſe after a matter of fifty or ſixty years, of ſo many hundred thouſand men ſo elect and ſtrong, ſcarce one ſhould be found alive.

We may dream, and feign unto our ſelves, I know not what *Eternities*: But in the mean time *we muſt needs die and are as water ſpilt upon the ground.* 2 Sam. 14. 14.

Another and better type of *Eternity* was found out at *Conſtantinople*, in the year of our Lord 459. The Church of *Conſtantinople*, in the time when *Gennadius* was Biſhop, was augmented by a new and noble foundation of a Monaſtery of *Acœmets* dedicated to Saint *John Baptiſt*. Theſe *Acœmets* were ſo called for not ſleeping, becauſe they were never all at once to ſleep, but ſtill to be exerciſed in their courſe night and day in ſinging praiſes unto God. Theſe *Acœmets* were divided after this manner into three companies

panies: ſo that when the firſt company had made an end of ſinging divine praiſes, the ſecond ſhould begin; and when the ſecond had made an end, the third ſhould begin. By means of this godly inſtitution, the City had in ſome ſort heaven within it ſelf always ſounding with the praiſes of God; or at leaſt a Type or Repreſentation of the *Eternity* in heaven, where God ſhall be praiſed for all *Eternity*, with great delight and cheerfulneſs, and without all wearineſs. Therefore hath the *Pſalmiſt* good cauſe to cry out, *Bleſſed are they which dwell in thy houſe, they will ſtill be praiſing Thee*, Pſal. 84. 4. Then ſhall all the bleſſed ſay, as *Peter* did upon the Mountain, *It is good for us to be here*, Matth. 17.

Bernard Serm. 2. de Om. S. S.

4. For, as St. *Bernard* ſpeaketh, *Eternity* is true riches without meaſure: but he adds this withall, It is not found, unleſs it be ſought with perſeverance. But how ſhall we ſo ſeek that we may obtain it? Hear what the good Father ſaith: By *Poverty*, by *Meekneſs*, and by *Tears*, there is renewed in the ſoul the ſtamp and image of *Eternity*, which comprehendeth all times. Firſt, *Poverty* is the way to *Eternity*. *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 3.

Where

Where poor men are diſperſed and forſaken, there is the heart and the money locked up together in the cheſt: Where money is expended according to the rules of *Avarice*, there is no affect or love of poverty, there is no deſire or love of *Eternity*. Secondly, *Meekneſs*: By *Meekneſs* we make our ſelves ſecure of things preſent, and have an aſſurance of things to come. *Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the earth*, Mat. 5. 5. If any man ask, What ſhall we ſay of him that is void of *Meekneſs* and *Patience*. that can ſcarce at any time ſpeak a mild word? What gains he by his implacable impatience? What doth it profit him to rage and fret with indignation, to make outcries and tumults, to ſhew his will to do miſchief, though he cannot effect what he would; or to conclude, to ſalute no man civilly, as if he were an enemy to all humanity and affability? What ſhall we ſay of ſuch a man? If there be any ſuch, he is ſure to ſuffer loſs of goods or good name or both. For the riches which he hath, he poſſeſſeth not, but keeps them like a dog, whoſe property is to bark at a man, to fly upon him, and to bite him: as for his good name, if he have any, he ſhall not augment it by the title of impatience: and as for Heaven, he loſeth that before he hath taken poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of it. Thirdly, *Tears.* For by weeping and mourning we redeem the time paſt, we recover what we prodigally ſpent by ſinning. But this mourning and ſorrow muſt not laſt for an hour only, or for a day: for this is nothing elſe but to do as he did, who at his mothers death put on mourning-clothes, forced for the preſent a few tears, and ſo went along after the bier, and left her not till he ſaw her buried; but the ſame day, or the next day after, wiped away all tears from his eyes, changed his weeping into laughing, caſt off his mourning clothes, and put on colours. This is not to mourn in good earneſt, to make an end of mourning ſo ſuddenly. But this we do (alas!) too often. To day we make publick confeſſion of our ſins to God, and here Abſolutson; we repent us of our ſins, and receive the holy Communion: and within a day after we ſin again with delight, and without fear, and oftentimes more grievouſly than before. We dereſt for the preſent the wicked courſe of our life paſt; and we return again to the ſame paſs. We forſwear the ſins which we formerly committed; and again the ſame day we commit the ſame. So with the ſame tongue we proclaim Chriſt innocent, and crucifie him afreſh, as if we were the true Brothers

of

of *Pontius Pilate*, who with one and the ſame mouth did both abſolve him and condemn him, confeſſing that he *found no cauſe of death in him*, Luke 23. 22, 24. and yet adjudging him to be crucified. We are very fickle and inconſtant, but in nothing more conſtant than in the repition of a vicious courſe of life. Alas! alas! we carry too much of the *Moon*, that is, Inconſtancy in our breaſt. Sometimes we are ſo zealous and ſo holy, that we will not admit of a cheerful countenance, for fear leſt it ſhould hinder our ſanctity and devotion: we look demurely, caſting out eyes down to the ground, and knit the brows, as being angry with our ſelves, when we find in our ſelves the leaſt remiſsneſs or coldneſs in holy duties. But this ſanctity and devotion doth never continue long: after a while we begin to hate even piety it ſelf: and the ſtream being turned, we turn again to our former riot and intemperance; and we are as ready to diſſolve the knot of friendſhip made betwixt God and us, as at the firſt we were unwilling to have it knit. At length *Piety*, attended with *ſorrow* and *repentance*, preſents her ſelf again unto us, and put to flight laſciviouſneſs, until the time comes that we begin to *repent* us of our *repentance*. So we ſeldom continue long in any honeſt and godly courſe, for it

it ſeems unto us too laborious: and at every light beck we row down the ſtream of our former uncleanneſs. Such is the inconſtancy of our life, that it preſents unto our minds all ſorts of pleaſures and vices. We make an outward ſhew of adoring virtue! but in heart and mind we fall down and worſhip vice; a moſt laborious kind of ſervice. This is not the way unto *Eternity*, unleſs it be of puniſhment and torments which ſhall have no end.

Let us ſingle out one Chriſtian man of many, and ſuch a one eſpecially as is moſt addicted to his pleaſure; let us carry him along with us to the mouth of a Furnace red hot and flaming; and then let us begin to queſtion him after this manner: How much pleaſure wouldeſt thou ask to continue burning in this Furnace for one day? He will anſwer to this undoubtedly, I would not be tormented in theſe flames for one day, to gain the whole world and all the pleaſures in the world. But let us propound another condition unto him. What reward wouldſt thou ask to endure this fire only for half a day? Propound what reward you will, there is nothing ſo delicate, ſo precious, ſo dear unto me, which I would be willing to buy at ſo dear a price, as theſe torments. But to try once more, What reward and pleaſure wouldſt thou ask

ask to go into this furnace, and to ſtay there but one hour? His anſwer certainly will be this, Let the moſt covetous and impudent man in the world ask what he can, that is not to be compared with the unutterable and unſufferable ſcorchings and torments of this fire, though they ſhould laſt but for one hour. If theſe anſwers be good and agreeable to right reaſon, How comes it to paſs, O God, that for a little gain, and that but vile, for deceitful honour, and that fugitive, for filthy pleaſures, and that not long, ſo many men ſo little regard *Eternal* puniſhment in Hell-fire! We cannot be perſwaded with any reward, no, though it be to gain a whole world to ſtay but for one hour in fire *Temporal*: and yet, if either gain at any time invited us, or if honour ſmileth upon us, or pleaſure allureth us, we never fear Hell and fire *Eternal*. But thou wilt ſay, I hope for better; God is merciful, and his goodneſs will not ſuffer me to deſpair, or to be terrified with the fear of evil to come. So indeed we are wont to ſpeak: and the words in themſelves are not impious, if our works were pious. But for the moſt part our works are ſuch, that if we rightly conſider them, we have little cauſe to hope for mercy. It is a very dangerous and fooliſh part, for a man to live in a conſtant courſe of ungodlineſs

and

and to hope for *Eternity* amongſt the bleſſed. Alas! one ſin is ſufficient to condemn us. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath threatned in the Goſpel? *Whoſoever ſhall ſay unto his brother, Thou fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire,* Matth. 5. 22. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath forbidden? *Whoſoever looketh upon a woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart.* v. 28. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath premoniſhed? *Not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he which doth the Will of my Father which is in heaven.* Matth. 7. 21. Knoweſt thou not that Chriſt ſhall ſhut many out of the gate? *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not his croſs and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* Matth. 10. 37, 38. Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt hath openly and plainly ſaid, and again repeated? *Many be called, but few choſen:* Matth. 20. 16. & 22. *Few* indeed, yea very *few*. Knoweſt thou not how often Chriſt hath exhorted to amendment of life? *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom if Heaven,* Matth. 18. 3. *If thy hands or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life, halt and maimed, rather than having*

two

two hands, or two feet, to be caſt into everlaſting fire, v. 8. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh,* Luk. 13. 3. And not long after, *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight gate: for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* ver. 24. Knoweſt thou not how expreſly St. *Paul* recites up all thoſe things that hinder us from entering into that bleſſed *Eternity? The works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time paſt, that they which do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. Now if any man be guilty to himſelf of any one of theſe ſins here reckoned up, and is not ſo grieved for it, that he ſeeks by all means poſſible to avoid it for the time to come, he may ſing to himſelf if he will, this vain *Spero*, I hope, and I hope: but this mans hope is indeed none at all, but mere raſhneſs and preſumption. For a man to adventure the danger of ſtripes and blows, is an evil that may be born. To loſe at play an hundred or a thouſand Florens, is a great misfortune, but may be endured. To lay his head

head at ſtake, and to bring his life in danger, is a bad adventure; but at the worſt it is but loſs of life, and that loſs is not of all other the greateſt. But to hazard the eternal ſalvation both of body and ſoul, by living at uncertainties, by hoping in words, and deſpairing in works, nullifying hope by a wicked and ungodly life: this is the moſt extreameſt of all evils: this is the moſt grievous misfortunes a man can fall into: this is moſt pernicious raſhneſs and boldneſs: this is extream folly and madneſs. *Now conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you*, Pſal. 50. 22.

CHAP. III.

That the way of Eternity *is diligently and carefully to be ſought after.*

LET every Chriſtian man therefore often ask himſelf, and others alſo which are in the place of God, this queſtion, What ſhall I do that I may obtain bleſſed *Eternity*, or *Eternal* bleſſedneſs? Am I in the right way that leadeth unto *Eternity*? Something I do indeed, but it is but very little, and not worth ſpeaking of, I thirſt and breath after the joys which are immortal and *Eternal*: but few are my works, cold and imperfect at the beſt, and altogether

altogether unworthy of an *Eternal* reward. I think it long till I arrive at the haven: but I am afraid of the troubleſome waves and tempeſts by the way? when as yet notwithſtanding that is the ſafeſt and beſt way unto heaven, which is moſt rough and narrow. This is the very Truth it ſelf of Gods mouth pronounceth, and Chriſt proclaimeth, ſaying, *Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate: For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be* (alack! too many) *that go in thereat. Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be* (alack! too few) *that find it*, Matth. 17. 13, 14, Again, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: For many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able*, Luk. 13. 24. Oh what a fearful word is that, MANY; and that FEW! How ſhould it make us tremble! But we miſerable men deceive our ſelves, raſhly promiſing unto our ſelves *Eternity*: and yet I cannot tell whether we may be more truly ſaid to hope, or to dream, that we ſhall be reckoned amongſt thoſe few before mentioned. Would to God *now*, even *now* whileſt it *is the accepted time*, and *the day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. we would have a diligent and an intent eye upon *Eternity*, and reaſon thus with our ſelves:

Alas! What is all this that I ſuffer; Or, that I ſee others ſuffer? It is nothing if it be compared with *Eternity*. What if I could reckon up as many labours and perils as Saint *Paul* himſelf did undergo, as they are by him ſet down in his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, and the eleventh Chapter? 2 *Cor.* 11. 27. If I ſhould endure *hunger* and *thirſt*, enmities and injuries, ſickneſs and poverty? Yea more, what if I were *ſtoned* with Saint *Paul*, and *beaten with rods*? What if I *ſuffered ſhipwrack*? *ver.* 25. All theſe are nothing to puniſhments *Eternal*. Therefore in all adverſity, I muſt thus think with my ſelf, I ſhall *ſee an end of all*, Pſal. 119. 96.

The Prophet *Daniel* having reckoned up ſundry calamities, at length addeth theſe words, *Even to the time of the end: becauſe it is yet for a time appointed*, Dan. 11. 35. Come hither, come hither, all ye that are in affliction, in ſorrow, need, ſickneſs, or any other calamity. Why do ye drown your ſelves in your own tears? why do ye make your life bitter unto you with impatience and complaining? Here is comfort for you, great comfort drawn from the time of that ſuffering. Are divers calamities upon you? Be not caſt down: have a good courage: they ſhall continue only *for a time*; Do ye ſuffer contumely and reproach?

proach? are ye wearied with injuries? are other troubles multiplied upon you? ceaſe to lament; all theſe ſhall laſt but *for a time*; they ſhall not laſt *for ever*; your ſighing ſhall have an end.

Tears may diſtill from your eyes *for a time*; but ſighes and groans ſhall not ariſe from your hearts *for ever*. The time is at hand, when you ſhall be delivered from all grief; and be tranſlated unto everlaſting happineſs. This is moſt clear by that in *Eccleſiaſticus*, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy ſhall ſpring up unto him*, Eccles. 1.23. But ye alſo which think your ſelves the only happy men on earth, and the darlings of the world, know thus much, and be not proud, neither lift up your horn; All your ſeeming happineſs (for it is no more at the beſt) hath but ſhort and narrow bounds and limits, and is quickly paſſed over. Your triumphing is but *for a time*; your golden dreams laſt but *for a time*; after a time, and that not long, death will command you to put off Fortunes painted vizard, and ſtand among the croud. Then ſhall ye truly appear ſo much the more unhappy, by how much the more ye ſeemed to your ſelves before, in your own fooliſh imaginations, moſt happy. Therefore whether ſorrow or joy, all is but *for a time* in this world.

It is *Eternity* alone which is not concluded within any bounds of time. Whether therefore the body ſuffer or the mind; whether we loſe riches or honours; whether our patience be exerciſed by ſorrow or grief, cares, or any afflictions, inward or outward all is but painted and momentany, if we think upon *Eternal* puniſhments. For when fifty thouſand years ſhall be paſſed after the day of Judgment, there ſhall ſtill remain fifty thouſand Millions of years; and when thoſe likewiſe are paſſed, there ſhall ſtill remain more and more, and yet more Millions of years, and there ſhall never be an end. But who thinks upon theſe things? who weighs and conſiders them well with himſelf? Sometimes we ſeem to have ſavour of things *Eternal*: but we are toſſed up and down with the motions and thoughts of things paſt, and things future; our heart wavereth, and is full of vanity. Who will eſtabliſh it, and ſet it in a ſure place, that it may ſtand a while, and ſtanding admire, and admiring be raviſht with the ſplendor of *Eternity*, which always ſtands, and never paſſeth away? Well did *Myrogenes*, when *Euſtachius* Archbiſhop of *Jeruſalem* ſent gifts unto him, he did very well, I ſay, in refuſing them, and

Auguſt. lib. 11. *conf. cap.* 11.

and saying, Do but one thing for me, Only pray for me, that I may be delivered from *Eternal* torment. Neither was *Tully* out of the way when he said, No humane thing can seem great unto a wise man, who hath the knowledg of all *Eternity*, and of the magnitude of the whole world. But *Francis*, the Author of the Order of the *Franciscans*, hath a saying far better than that of *Tully*, The pleasure that is here, saith he, is but short; but the punishment that shall be hereafter, is infinite: The labour that is here, is but small; but the glory which shall be hereafter, is *Eternal*. Take your choice. Many are called, few chosen, but all rewarded according to their works.

Tull. Tusc. quæst. lib. 3.

Let us hasten our repentance therefore, whilest we have time. It is better, saith *Guerricus*, to be purged by water than by fire, and it is far easier. Now is the time for repentance; Let our timely repentance therefore prevent punishment. Whosoever is afraid of the hoar frost, the snow shall fall upon him; he which feareth the lesser detriment, shall suffer a greater; he which will not undergo the light burden of Repentance, shall be forced to undergo the most heavy burden and most

Guerr. Serm. de Puri.

grievous punishment of Hell. S. *Gregory* hath a saying to this purpose; Some saith he, whilest they are afraid of *Temporal* punishments, run themselves upon *Eternal* Punishment. Hither we may add that of *Pacian*; Remember, saith he, that in hell there is no place for confession of sins, no place for Repentance; for then it is too late to repent, and the time is past. Make hast therefore whilest you are in the way. We are afraid of *Temporal* fire, and the *Executioners* hands; but what are these to the claws of tormenting *Devils*, and the *Everlasting* fire of Hell? The Counsel of Saint *Ambrose* to a lapsed Virgin fits well in this place.

Ambr. cap. 8. ad Virg. lapsa.

True Repentance, saith he, ought not to be in word only, but in deed; and this is true Repentance indeed, if thou settest before thine eyes from what glory thou art fallen; and considerest with thy self out of what book thy name is blotted; and believest that now thou art near unto utter darkness, where there is weeping & gnashing of teeth without end. And when thou art certainly perswaded that these things are true, as indeed they are, seeing that the soul that sinneth is in danger of Hell fire, and there is no means after Baptism left to escape, but only Repentance;

pentance ; be content to ſuffer any labour, and to undergo any affliction, to be freed from *Eternal* puniſhment. The diſeaſes of the body move the ſick man to purge the body : Let the diſeaſes of our ſouls move us alſo to take the purgation of repentance : let the deſire of our ſalvation move us : let the fear of *Eternal* death and *Eternal* torments move us : let the hope of attaining *Eternal* life and *Eternal* glory move us. Let us embrace that which purgeth the ſoul, and let us eſchew that which polluteth it. And nothing defiles the ſoul more than a filthy body. Faithful is this counſel of Saint *Ambroſe*, and worthy of us to be embraced.

O Chriſt Jeſus, grant unto us that we may ſo poſſeſs things tranſitory and *temporal*, that finally we loſe not the things which are *Eternal* : and give us grace to walk in their ſteps, and to follow their good example, of whom Saint *Auguſtine* ſpeaketh ; Many there are, ſaith he, that willingly come under the yoke, and of proud and haughty men, become humble and lowly, deſiring to be what before they deſpiſed, and hating to be what before they were ; paſſing by, like ſtrangers, things preſent, and making haſte with greedineſs after things to come. They pant in their running towards their *Eternal* Country,

preferring Abstinence before Fulness, Watching before Sleep, and Poverty before Riches, accounting labour in the conquest of vices to be but pleasure, loving their enemies, passing by injuries; and all for the hope of an *Eternal* reward. And who then would not suffer any extremity and labour, to purchase unto themselves an *Eternal* reward?

Thomas Montgomery
His Book - 1710
June th 24

THE

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Ihave considered the dayes of old the yeares ofantient times *Ps: 76. 5.*

The arrows passe by me the voice of the THVNDER *is round about me the arrows of present punishments fly over my head the voice of that horrible thunder* Goye Cirled into ETERNALL *fire is like a wheel that will alwaies turn.*

THE FOURTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How holy David *meditated upon* Eternity, *and how we ſhould imitate him.*

THat God ſhould puniſh the *Apoſtate Angels* and men condemned at the laſt day, with *Eternal* puniſhments, this hath ſeemed ſo ſtrange to ſome and ſo incredible, that *Origen* himſelf (a man otherwiſe of an admirable wit and excellent learning, very well skilled in Scripture, hath been ſo bold as to teach, that the Devils and the Damned after a certain time, when they ſhall be ſufficiently purged by the fire from their ſins, ſhall at length be reſtored to grace. But S. *Auguſtine* and others convince him and condemn him of this his error. Yet notwithſtanding this error hath found in the world many

Lib. 21 *De civitate Dei, cap.* 23. *&c.*

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favourers. Certain Hereticks called the *Aniti*, have diſſeminated and ſcattered it throughout *Spain*, by divers their interpretations. Some thought that all the damned, others that Chriſtians only, others that Catholicks only, others that thoſe only that had been more liberal than others in giving of alms, ſhould be delivered at length out of Hell. Though St. *Auguſtine* hath not refuted theſe their errors, yet the holy writ hath done it plainly and openly. Matth. 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire*: And again, ver. 46. *And theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, but the righteous into life Eternal.* Here no Gloſſes or Interpretations will ſerve their turn to defend their errours. Wherefore the Divine *Pſalmiſt* King *David*, though he delighted much in the conſideration of both times, that which was paſt, and that which was to come. *Mine eyes*, (ſaith he) *prevent the night-watches*: Pſal. 119. 148. and again in another place, *Thou holdeſt mine eyes waking*: *I am ſo troubled that I cannot ſpeak*, Pſal. 77. 4. What was it, Bleſſed Prophet, that thus broke thy ſleep? What buſineſs hadſt thou to do ſo early, before day-light? What cauſed thee ſo to keep ſilence, and to be troubled in mind? Hear what he ſaith, *I have conſidered the days*

days of old, and the years of ancient times, and the years of Eternity I have had in my mind, Pſal. 77. 5. Lo, this was the thing that broke his ſleep, when he compared the years that were paſt with the years that were to come, and with *Eternity*. Neither did he thus in the day only, but *I call to remembrance*, ſaith he, *my ſong in the night: I commune with my own heart, and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*, ver. 6. And what moved him to this nightly exerciſe? *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever?* See how he fears and trembles at the very conſideration of *Eternity*, how he is afraid of Gods judgments, leſt God ſhould puniſh them with *Eternal* puniſhment. And what is the end and effect of this Meditation? *And I ſaid, This is mine infirmity: But I will remember*, &c. or, *Now I will begin.* So in an inſtant, at the very ſame minute, he became better than he was, and delayed not, neither did he defer his Repentance, and put it off till worſe years; But, ſaith he, *Now I will begin*, now I will live a more godly life than I have done. He ſaith not, After ſuch an hour, or after ſuch a day; but, *Now, even now.* I, will ſome men ſay, if I were as *David* was: If I could meditate of *Eternity* as bleſſed *David* did, it may

may be then I would readily and with alacrity ſay with *David*, *Now I will begin*: But I am ſo intangled with daily cares, ſo hindred with worldly buſineſs, ſo diſtracted into divers parts one way or other, that I cannot. I live amongſt men; I ſee and hear much evil; I have no time or leiſure once to have ſo good a thought in mind as the thought of *Eternity*. When we meet together in company to make merry, amidſt our ſports, and amongſt our cups, we never confer about ſuch grave points: our minds wander up and down about many things, and cannot then fix themſelves upon the conſideration of *Eternity*. At our feaſts and merry-meetings, we take our cups, and pleaſe our ſelves in making jeſts: Thoughts of *Eternity* are too ſevere, too ſad and melancholick to be entertained by us; we baniſh ſuch out of our company. We enquire what news out of *Italy*, or *France*, or *Spain*. That which you tell us of ſo often concerning Heaven and Hell, is now old, and grown ſtale. We know it well enough already, what need you repeat it ſo often, till we loath it? So by this means there is no place or time left once to think upon *Eternity*. O Chriſtian Brother, it is true indeed which thou ſayeſt, I cannot deny it. But I could wiſh thou wouldſt be as

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ready and forward to amend thy fault, as to confeſs it. It is too clear and manifeſt, we ſee it with our eyes, that there is little or no care in the world of *Eternity*, although one thing or other every day ſtill puts us in mind of it.

The Book of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *Rome* at the Conſecration of their Biſhops doth appoint theſe words to be recited, *Annos Eternos in mente habe*, *Keep* ſtill *in mind the years of Eternity*; or, *Think upon Eternity*. For when the Pope new Elect, in a ſolemn manner is carried along to St. *Peters Church*, there goes one before him, having in his hand burning flax, and ſhaking it, he repeateth thrice theſe words, *Pater Sancte, ſic tranſit gloria mundi*, *Holy Father, ſo the glory of the world paſſeth away*. It were a devout and godly practice, if we did every day at the beginning and end of all our actions, ſay unto our ſelves theſe words, *Annos Æternos in mente habe*, *Think upon Eternity*, But eſpecially when we are tempted unto any ſin, when the Devil ſuggeſts and puts into our minds ill thoughts, and when our Conſcience is in danger of being wounded, O then *Think upon Eternity*.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Divers admonitions to think upon Eternity.

Philip King of *Macedon* appointed a certain noble young man to ſalute him thrice every morning after this manner, *Philippus, homo es*; *Remember Philip, Thou art but a man*; that being put daily in mind of his mortality, he might carry himſelf towards mortal men like a mortal man. Much more ought every good Chriſtian man, and true member of the Catholick Church, to be a monitor unto himſelf, and with due conſideration thrice at the leaſt every day ſay to himſelf, *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity*! Why ſo? *Set thine houſe in order* (ſaith the Prophet to King *Hezekiah*;) *For thou ſhalt die and not live.* There will come an evening for certain, after which thou ſhalt ſee no morning; or there will come a morning, after which thou ſhalt ſee no evening. Have an eſpecial care therefore in all thy actions, that thou woundeſt not thy Conſcience; and truſt not too far to thoſe things that periſh, for fear leaſt thou thy ſelf together with them doſt likewiſe periſh, and finally loſe the things that are *Eternal.*

It is a cuſtom in *Germany*, and not to be diſliked, in the evening when a Candle

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is firſt lighted, or brought into a room, to ſay, *Deus det nobis lucem Æternam*, God grant unto us light Eternal. We ſhall do well to imitate the *Germans* in this cuſtom: or rather it is already in uſe, and hath been long ago in many parts of this Kingdom, to ſay, *God grant us the light of Heaven.* It is very good daily to put us in mind of *Eternity.*

There is likewiſe a kind of *Eternity* in ſlavery and impriſonment, but infamous and horrible. It is a cruel puniſhment, and worſe than death it ſelf in ſome mens judgment, to be condemned to perpetual impriſonment, or to be a perpetual Gally-ſlave.

Thoſe which are oppreſſed with ſickneſs or other ſorrows, do likewiſe imagine with themſelves, that even in their ſufferings there is a kind of *Eternity.* Whence it comes to paſs that we often hear them utter ſuch diſtempered ſpeeches as theſe, *Will this laſt always? Shall I ſtill without end be nailed faſt to my bed? ſhall I ſuffer theſe pains and ſorrows perpetually? ſhall I always be thus vexed and tormented?* Alack! theſe *Eternities* are but ſhort, and ſoon come to an end. But if it be ſo grievous to fleſh and blood to endure ſlavery or impriſonment here on earth, though but for a moment (for our life is no longer, according to *David's*

vid's measure, but a span, which is very short) what care and diligence, and what circumspection ought we to use, that we be not cast into the prison of hell, and into the fathomless pit, where there is slavery and imprisonment, pain and torment, to be endured throughout all ages, beyond all times, even to all *Eternity*:

CHAP. II.

That Eternity transcends all numbers of Arithmetick.

THere is a very common and well known Arithmetick, which children are taught when they first go to School; and this is it. Suppose there was a mountain of very fine sand as big as the whole earth, or rather much bigger: then suppose that every year an Angel should take from this mountain one, and but one grain of sand; how many thousand, and thousand, and again I say thousand, yea how many hundred thousand, and yet more, how many thousand millions of years must there needs pass, before it can be perceived that the mountain is grown less, or any whit diminished? Let a man that is skilful in Arithmetick sit down, and begin to cast, how many years must pass before the moun-

mountain, or half the mountain be removed by the Angel. Certainly we cannot conceive that ever he ſhall be able to caſt up the total number of the ſand. But herein are we miſtaken: for although we cannot conceive it poſſible to be done, yet it may be done. But *Eternity* exceeds this number of years beyond all compariſon, it is moſt certain: for *between a thing finite and a thing infinite there is no compariſon, no proportion.* *Eternity* hath no limits, no terms, no bounds, none at all. But ſuppoſe the damned ſhould burn in Hell no longer, than till the mountain by grain after grain, year after year, ſhould by the Angel be quite removed: yet what an incomprehenſible number of years muſt firſt paſs, before they can expect to ſee the day of deliverance! But (alas!) there is no ſuch day to be expected; their torments ſhall have no end: After that incomprehenſible number of years, it ſhall be truly ſaid, Now beginneth their *Eternity*, their *Eternity* is not in any part expired, they are as far from the end of their torments as they were at the beginning. After a thouſand years, yea after a hundred thouſand years, there ſhal not be an end, or middle, or beginning of *Eternity*: for the meaſure of *Eternity* is *Always*. The ſame art of Arithmetick about the buſineſs of *Eternity*,

a late Divine teacheth, in words somewhat different, but in meaning all one with the former. I therefore add it, because a man can never sufficiently think or speak of it. Consider, saith he, what is the length of *Eternity*. How long shall God and his Saints reign? How long shall the damned burn in Hell? *For ever*. How long is that? Imagine an hundred thousand years. Alas! That is nothing in respect of *Eternity*. Imagine ten hundred thousand years, yea so many ages: Yet that is nothing, *Eternity* is still as long as it was. Imagine a thousand millions of years: And yet that is nothing. *Eternity* is not a whit shortned. Imagine yet more a 1000000000000000000000000000; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand; thousand-thousand-Millions of years. Imagine, I say, the damned should burn in Hell so many years, and yet thou hast not found the very beginning of *Eternity*. Imagine once more so many millions of millions of years as there are drops in the Sea, and yet thou art not come to the beginning of *Eternity*. Such for continuance is the *Eternity* of joy into which the blessed shall enter, and the *Eternity* of torments which the damned shall suffer. O Jesus spare us, spare us O Jesus, O Jesus save us. Have mercy upon us, O good Jesus, and

Cornelius à Lapide in c. 15 Exod. ver. 8.

suffer

ſuffer us not to be plunged headlong into the bottomleſs pit, to be tormented with the damned for all *Eternity.*

But yet if God would but ſay unto the damned, let the earth be covered with moſt fine ſand, and let the world be filled therewith, and let it be heaped up ſo high as heaven, and then let an Angel come once in every thouſand years, and take one grain of ſand out of this heap; when after ſo many thouſand years as there be grains of ſand, the Angel ſhall have removed the whole heap, then will I deliver you out of Hell: O how would the damned exult and rejoyce and not think themſelves damned! But (alas) after ſo many thouſands of years there remain yet more, and more, and infinite more, to all *Eternity*, even for ever and ever. This is that heavy weight that ſo preſſeth the damned. Let every one therefore that ſinneth, conſider with himſelf, and again, I ſay, let him conſider, that unleſs he repent, he ſhall be preſſed and groan under this heavy weight of *Eternity.*

Gulielmus Peraldus, Biſhop of *Lions*, a very religious and learned man, hath another manner of reckoning, meditating upon the innumerable number of years throughout which the damned ſhall be tormented. If the damned, ſaith he, ſhould every day diſtil from their eyes but one ſmall tear, and

and those tears should be added together day after day, they would at length far exceed the drops of the Ocean: for they have their number and measure; and it is easie with God to say, So many are the drops of the Ocean and no more; but the tears of the damned exceed all number and measure, Alas! Alas! How little do we think upon these things! How freely and wilfully do we sin, and make our selves guilty of *Eternal* punishment, and that oftentimes for a very little short and filthy pleasure?

Yet there remains one way more, of casting up this numberless number of years: Suppose there were a schedule of Parchment a span broad, but so long that it would begirt and incircle the whole Globe of the Earth: and suppose it were written all over very close with figures of 9, from one end to another: who so skilful an Arithmetician, that can tell the number thereof? What Mountain so great, that consisteth of so many grains of dust of sand? What Ocean so vast, that containeth within it so many drops of water? And yet this is nothing to *Eternity*: it stretcheth it self further than so; it knows no bounds; it is extended beyond all measure. But how far is it extended? It is extended infinitely and without end. If thy heart (O Christian

ſtian man) be not turned into a ſtone, it cannot but melt at the conſideration of theſe things, and the very thought of the bottomleſs pit and *Eternal* puniſhment will make thee fear and tremble. If there be any ſenſe in thee, here it will ſhew it ſelf. But as I ſaid before, too few think upon theſe things; and too many live ſo ſecure of their ſalvation, as if there were no Heaven, no God, no Hell, nor *Eternity*. Every day they heap up ſin upon ſin, as if they laboured and ſtudied to make their laſt day to exceed the former, for the meaſure and number of their ſins: and ſo they paſs unto *Eternity* ſporting and playing, as if they went to priſon but a few weeks or days. Such men as theſe, ſaith St. *Gregory*, when they ſhould be mourning for their ſins, they are dancing for their pleaſure; and when they ſhould be ſeriouſly meditating upon death, they run laughing unto execution. This is blindneſs indeed, this is oblivious madneſs. For this ſhort life which is but the ſhadow of *Eternity*, we labour beyond all meaſure; but for the life which is *Eternal*, and moſt happy, we ſcarce take any pains at all: And yet the not obtaining of this life is the incurring of *Eternal* death; which as it is a torment more grievous than all the torments of this life, ſo in this it is moſt grievous, that there is no

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reſt or mitigation of pain, no not for one ſhort hour in the infinite ſpace of all *Eternity*.

CHAP. III.

What effect and fruit the conſideration of Eternity bringeth forth.

AND this is it that hath made ſo many good Chriſtians, and ſo many holy *Martyrs* ſo prompt and ready to ſuffer any torments, and any kind of death, that even in their greateſt pains, when they lay wallowing in their own blood, they were moſt ſtout and couragious, and with a conſtant look and chearful countenance inſulted over their Tormentors. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* This is it that hath made the world ſeem diſtaſteful and unpleaſant unto many, inſomuch that they have taken their leave of all pleaſures, and embraced and entertained a ſevere and ſtrict courſe of life, giving themſelves wholly to reading, meditation and prayer, and ſuch holy duties, minding heaven, and heavenly things. *They had the years of Eternity in mind.* The thought of *Eternity* will make all things in this life ſeem eaſie and pleaſant, though to fleſh and blood they ſeem moſt grievous and unpleaſant.

It

It makes all labours seem light and very short. Prayer, study, watching, and such like holy duties it commends unto us, and makes them seem amiable. It seasons and sweetens hunger and thirst. It mitigates the sense of pinching poverty. It makes all manner of crosses in this life not only tolerable, but also grateful and comfortable. Whosoever hath the years of *Eternity* in mind, and imprints them within, deeper and deeper by daily meditation, shunneth no labour, neither is daunted with any losses. Offer him a Kingdom, offer him all the delights and pleasures in the World: and he will not change his poor estate and condition for them. Such a man as this is never complaining; he endures all things, he submits himself to all. For thus he thinks with himself, what a small thing is this or that, that or this, and of how short continuance! I will therefore endure it patiently; it will not last always. It is but for an hour, and that a very short one, that mine enemies here oppress me. Well, go to ye detractors, bite me still, if ye will, ye enviors; I will not run from you. This is your hour and the power of darkness: But I expect the day of the Lord, and the day of *Eternity*; and why should I afflict and torment my self with sorrow and lamentation? All this life

is but a death of one hour: The victory is not difficult; but the triumph is *Eternal*. Why ſhould I be afraid of the raging waves of this troubleſome world? I have ſight of the haven already. Now it rains and thunders upon the heads of the good and godly; but the ſtorm will ſhortly blow over. But upon his enemies God ſhall always rain fire and brimſtone, ſtorm and tempeſt: this ſhall be their portion to drink, Dan. 12.2. *And many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth* (ſo propheſieth *Daniel*) *ſhall awake; ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and everlaſting contempt*. In the old Law God commanded *Moſes*, ſaying, *Numb.* 10. 2. *Make thee two trumpets of ſilver, of an whole piece ſhalt thou make them*, v. 4. *If they blow but with one trumpet, then the Princes, which are the heads of the thouſands of Iſrael ſhall gather themſelves unto thee. When ye blow an alarm, then the Camp ſhall go forwards.* Unto theſe two trumpets we may compare theſe two words, NOW and ALWAYS. This is the law of the world, NOW let us be merry; *now* let us rejoyce; *now* let us enjoy our goods, while we have them: come, let us *now* crown our ſelves with roſes, before they be withered; *now* let us leave in every place the ſigns and footſteps of our joy. They that attend only to the ſound of this Trumpet, they that have ears

to

to hear nothing but this NOW, they live for the moſt part ſo, as if there were no ALWAYS for to follow. Therefore they do not remove the camp; amidſt their pleaſures they wilfully forget that they are here but Pilgrims and ſtrangers: whitherſoever the wanton fleſh inviteth them they go with greedineſs: they are buſied altogether in heaping up riches and following pleaſures: and the ſound of this NOW doth ſo obtund and dull their ears, that they are deaf to all good counſels and precepts: and they will not ſo much as lend an ear to that ALWAYS which ſhall follow. But thew which open their ears to hear, and their hearts to underſtand, when the Church ſoundeth both trumpets, (as it often doth) and thereupon ſeriouſly conſider with themſelves, and compare together this ſhort NOW with that infinite and everlaſting ALWAYS, they will uſe no delay, but preſently remove the camp: they live here as Pilgrims and ſtrangers: they have their loyns girt; they remember that they are in a journey; they ſend their riches and pleaſures before them into their Country which is above; they chuſe rather to enjoy them ALWAYS in Heaven, than NOW for a ſhort time upon earth. Certain it is, whoſoever heareth attentively, and mindeth ſeriouſly the Alarm of theſe

Trumpets, and thereupon compareth together things present with things future, and things transitory with things *Eternal*, he will presently make himself ready to depart, he will prepare himself a place of burial, he will lay out his winding-sheet, he will send for his bier, and furnish himself with all things necessary for his journey, remembring still in every place, that he is passing on the way to *Eternity*, and conferring with himself every day after this manner: How shall I be able to give an account unto God for all my thoughts, words and deeds? and, When shall I give up my account? and what sentence will he pass upon me? NOW therefore will I die unto my self, that I may ALWAYS live unto my self and unto God. Well is it with that man, which timely and daily thus thinketh upon *Eternity*. Whatsoever we do, we are passing on our way, and we do not know how short it is, unto the gate which leadeth unto *Eternity*. At the last hour of our life death shall bring us unto this gate, and compel us to enter. Let us therefore so live as if we were always expecting death, that if it should please God at any time to visit us with sickness, the fore-runner of death, we may entertain it cheerfully, and bear it patiently, lifting up our eyes unto Christ hanging upon the Cross,

Croſs, the true and perfect pattern of Patience: and when the time of our diſſolution draweth near, praying thus; Lord Jeſu ſtand by me and comfort me; Lord Jeſu be preſent with thy ſervant that putteth his truſt in thee; Lord Jeſu make me partaker of thy victory, Lord Jeſu receive my ſpirit, and lead me through the darkſome valley and ſhadow of death, lead me and forſake me not until thou haſt brought my ſoul into the land of the living, O thou moſt potent conquerour of death, O thou which art my light, life, and ſalvation.

BRITISH 1000C61 MUSEUM

To him be glory both now and for ever Amen 2 Pet. 3. 18

Because man shall go to his ETERNALL habitation Eccles Alas how vnlike are the houses of ETERNITIE One of them we must inhabit we must either for ever reiovce in heaven or for ever burne in hell

THE FIFTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How others, even wicked men themſelves, have meditated upon Eternity.

THE old Hiſtory of the Fathers telleth us of a religious man, that reading upon the ninetieth Pſalm came at length, having not thought of it, to theſe words, *For a thouſand years in thy ſight are but as yeſterday, when it is paſt,* and here ſtuck: For he could not conceive a reaſon, why a thouſand years and one day ſhould be compared together. Whereupon they ſay there was a little bird ſent by God, which ſo raviſht the man with her ſweet ſinging, that though he heard her ſing a very great while together yet he thought the time very ſhort, ſcarce a ſhort hour long. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth,* Joh. 3. 8. Not good men only have with holy *David* meditated upon *E-*

ternity, but even wicked men also, and those oftentimes against their will.

Benedictus Rhenanus reports of a vain and ungodly fellow, a very Epicure and mere worldling, which never used to fast or watch; one that could not endure the want of any thing, but especially sleep: Upon a certain night, it seemeth, this fellow could not sleep as he was wont, being much troubled with unusual dreams: so he turned himself upon his bed from one side to another, and could not by any means get any rest; then he wished it were day. But here the wind of the Lord began to blow, though it were in a strange land: for good thoughts were very rare in this man. Being weary with watching, and finding no ease or rest at all, thus he began to think with himself; Would any be hired upon any condition to lye thus two or three years together in darkness, without the company of friends, though his sickness were not very grievous? Would he be content to want his sports and plays so long? Would he be content to be bound to his bed, though it were a feather-bed, or a bed of Down, and never stir abroad to see any sights, or shews, or make merry with his friends? I think no man would. And shall alone amongst all men enjoy rest and pleasure by an especial priviledge, and

and have no end of grief and ſorrow? Surely no. Will I, nill I, needs I muſt ſome time or other lye down upon the bed of ſickneſs, unleſs I be ſuddenly taken away by death, which God forbid. (*This was a good wind, theſe were good cogitations.*) But what bed ſhall I have next, when death ſhall thruſt me out of this? My body muſt rot under earth: For this is the condition of all men after death. But what ſhall become of my ſoul in another world? Surely all men do not go to the ſame place after death. Do not ſome go one way, and ſome another? Is there not an Hell as well as an Heaven? Wo and alas! What kind of bed ſhall the damned find in Hell? How many years ſhall they lie there? In what year after their firſt entrance ſhall the flames ceaſe and be put out? Aſſuredly Chriſt doth not only in word threaten to caſt the wicked into everlaſting fire, but will alſo caſt them indeed. This thing is certain and very manifeſt. Therefore the damned ſhall burn in Hell for ever. Therefore a thouſand, and a thouſand, and again I ſay a thouſand years will not ſuffice to purge away the ſins of this ſhort life. Therefore they ſhall never ſee the ſun any more, nor Heaven, nor God, being moſt miſerable *Eternally* and without end. With ſuch

thoughts as theſe this man became ſo vigilant and watchful, and proceeded ſo far, that night and day he could not be at reſt, but *Eternity* did ſtill run in his mind. Fain indeed he would have ſhaken off the thoughts thereof, as gnawing worms; but he could not. Therefore he followed ſports and paſtimes, went to merry meetings, ſought out companions like himſelf, and ſate oftentimes ſo long at his cups, that he laid his Conſcience aſleep, and ſo ſeemed to take ſome reſt: but when he came again unto himſelf, his Conſcience being awakened did preſently accuſe him, and ſuggeſt unto him afreſh ſorrowful thoughts of *Eternity*. Thus finding no reſt, he reſolved at length to amend his manners, and to betake himſelf to a better courſe of life. And thus he began to reaſon with himſelf, Miſerable man that I am, what do I here? I ſo enjoy the world, that indeed I enjoy it not; I ſuffer many things I would not; I want many things which fain I would have: I ſerve like a ſlave, but who will pay me my wages! I ſee well enough how the world rewardeth thoſe that love it, and do all their lives nothing elſe but ſerve it. But ſuppoſe I had the fruition of all the delights and pleaſures in the world that my heart could wiſh: what certainty can

I have how long they ſhall laſt? I am not certain whether I ſhall live till to morrow or no: Daily funerals ſufficiently prove this. Oh *Eternity*, if thou wert not! Oh *Eternity*, if thy place be not in Heaven, though it be on a ſoft Down-bed: thou canſt not but be bitter and unpleaſant. It is true indeed, it is a hard matter to withdraw our ſelves away from thoſe things whereunto we are accuſtomed, whether it be feaſting, or drinking, or company keeping, or ſuch like: But whileſt we delay and defer the time, death may prevent us, and take us away from all theſe. Why then doſt thou delay? why doſt thou not impoſe an honeſt and happy neceſſity upon thy ſelf, why doſt thou not reſolve thus preſently with thy ſelf? Well, I will be another man than I have been, if it pleaſe God I live. This life laſteth not long: But *Eternity* endureth for ever. I muſt walk now in a new way; I am reſolved upon it; and *Now* I begin. Where art thou bleſſed *Eternity*? I am ſeeking for thee, I am travelling towards thee.

To conclude, he did as he ſaid, he took his leave of the world, he changed the courſe of his life; and ſo lived and died an honeſt and godly man.

Oh *Eternity*, how few are they that

think thus seriously upon thee? But certainly there are very few, scarce any that weigh and consider well with themselves what they are, and so continue and persist in that consideration. We seek earnestly after all other things, only *Eternity* seemeth vile unto us, and not worth the looking after. Our thoughts run after riches, and yet the possession of them is very uncertain; we know not how soon they shall forsake us, or we them. We are ambitious after honours: and yet they are slippery, and soon slide away from us. We are in love with pleasures: and yet they have sorrow and bitterness in their latter end. We desire rest: but it is of no long continuance. We knit the knot of friendship with others: but it is such as death shall quickly dissolve. We are never well but when we are conversing with others: but our conversation is never in Heaven, where it should be. We seek for abundance: but it is there where it will soon fail. But surely if we did more often and seriously think upon *Eternity*, we should not have such a fervent desire after things of so short a continuance. I call Saint *Bernard* to witness, who saith thus, *He that longeth after things Eternal cannot but loath things transitory.*

There are that have often in their mouths

mouths I know not what *Eternity*, that will promiſe and ſwear, and make good reſolutions of amendment, and ſay thus; As long as I live, I will beware of ſuch a place, or ſuch a place, where I have formerly been tempted to ſin: I will never come near ſuch a man, or ſuch a woman, or ſuch a one that was my companion in evil, I will never come near him as long as I live. As long as I live, I will never go to ſuch and ſuch meetings, where there uſeth to be gluttony and drunkenneſs, dancing, chambering and wantonneſs, and ſuch like. It ſhall ſuffice me that I have been there once, and again, and perhaps oftner; that I have done as the company did, that I have ſinned with ſuch and ſuch. Theſe are good reſolutions: In this I commend thee, O man; Becauſe ſin is to be feared, thou doſt well in purpoſing to avoid the occaſion of ſinning: and I could wiſh thou wert as religious in obſerving what thou haſt promiſed, as thou art ready to promiſe. But (alas!) after a day or two, yea an hour or two, too forgetful of thy promiſe and good reſolution, thou doſt again the very ſame thing which lately thou didſt deteſt, abhor and forſwear. Therefore before thou makeſt a vow or promiſe unto God, it is good to uſe due conſideration and foreſight; and when

when thou haſt made a vow or promiſe unto God it is neceſſary to uſe after care and Chriſtian fortitude in performance. Thou muſt promiſe nothing raſhly and unadviſedly unto God: But what thou haſt promiſed thou muſt religiouſly and conſtantly keep and obſerve. How ſevere God is in puniſhing ſuch as break their vows and promiſes, we are ſufficiently taught by the woful experience and lamentable example of others.

CHAP. I.

The compariſon of mans labor and the ſpiders one with another.

THere is another *Eternity*, and that the worſt of all, which thoſe men promiſe to themſelves, which will needs erect unto themſelves an heaven out of heaven, and be bleſſed before they be dead. *Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye ſcornful men*, ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Becauſe ye have ſaid, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement*, Iſaiah 28. 14, 15. O ye mad men! How vain, and none at all, is this your *Eternity*! There is nothing permanent and perpetual in this priſon. Elegantly doth the Kingly Prophet declare this;

this; Pſal. 90. 9. *We ſpend our years,* ſaith he, *as a tale that is told, &c. We ſpend our years in muſing, like the Spider,* (for ſo ſome read it.) He could not have declared it better, and in fewer words. For what are all our years but a continual muſing, and wearisome exerciſe? All the time of our life is conſumed and waſted away with vain labours, many ſorrows, ſundry fears, often ſuſpicions, and innumerable troubles: Even as the Spider ſpendeth her ſelf in the weaving of her web. Our labours are continual, linked one unto another; our ſighs and groans continual, partly in the purſuing of our profits and pleaſures, and partly in the removing and eſchewing thoſe things which we count evil. We do many things, we undertake many labours, troubleſome and grievous to be born, and mean-while (alas! ſuch is our folly) we perceive not that we do but weave the Spiders web, taking a great deal of pains, with little ſucceſs, to no end or purpoſe. *We ſpend our years in muſing like the Spider.* It is a great deal of pains and care that the Spider taketh in weaving of her web, ſhe runneth much and often up and down, ſhe fetcheth a compaſs this way and that way, and returneth often to the ſame point, ſhe ſpendeth her ſelf in a multitude of

of fine-ſpun threads, to make her ſelf a round Cabinet; ſhe exenterateth her ſelf, and worketh out her own bowels, to make an artificial and curious piece of work which when it is made, is apt to be blown away with every puff of wind; ſhe hangeth it up aloft, ſhe faſtneth it to the roof of the houſe, ſhe ſtrengthneth it with many a thread, wheeling often round about, not ſparing her own bowels, but ſpending them willingly upon her work. And when ſhe hath done all this, ſpun her fine threads, weaved them on within another, wrought her ſelf a fine Canopy, hanged it aloft, and thinketh all is ſure; on a ſudden in the twinkling of an eye, with a light ſweep of a beeſome all falleth to the ground, and ſo her labour periſheth. But here is not all: Poor Spider! ſhe is either killed in her own web, or elſe ſhe is taken in her own ſnare, haled to death and troden under foot. Thus the ſilly *Animal* may be truly ſaid, either to weave her own winding ſheet, or to make a ſnare to hang her ſelf. Juſt ſo do many men, like the Spider, waſte and conſume themſelves to get preferment, to enjoy pleaſures, to gather riches, to keep them, and to increaſe them. In ſuch projects they ſpend all their wit, and oftentimes the healths of their bodies, running up and down, la-

bouring

bouring and ſweating, carking and caring: wearying themſelves, and weakning their bodies, even as the Spider doth by ſpinning out of her own bowels. And when they have done all this, they have but weaved the Spiders web to catch flies. Yea, oftentimes they are caught in their own nets, they are inſtruments of their own miſchief. The days of mirth which they promiſe to themſelves, prove oftentimes the days of mourning: That which they call their palace, becometh their burying place, So *we ſpend our years in muſing like the Spider*: I ſay, *in muſing*, for the moſt part: For we often purpoſe to do many things, and do them not. And what we do, moſt an end were better undone. Thoſe things which we purſue with ſuch greedineſs, for the moſt part flie from us; and thoſe things which we contend for with ſuch earneſtneſs, we ſeldom attain to: But ſuppoſe we did, (Alas!) they have no perpetuity. So *the covenant with death ſhall be diſannulled, and the agreemeent with hell ſhall not ſtand*, Iſa. 28. 18. We all conſume away and die: and which is worſt of all, we blindly ruſh headlong into *Eternity*, from whence there is no return.

Guerricus hearing theſe words read in the Church out of the Book of *Geneſis*, Gen.

Gen. 5. 5. *And all the days that Adam li*ved, *were nine hundred and thirty years: And he dyed.* 8. *And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: And he died.* 11. *And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: And he died. And all the days of Methuſelah were nine hundred ſixty and nine years: And he died, &c.* Hearing, I ſay theſe words read, the very conceit of death wrought ſo ſtrongly upon him, and made ſo deep an impreſſion in his mind, that he retired himſelf from the world, and gave himſelf wholly to his devotions, that ſo he might die the death of the godly, and arrive more ſafely at the haven of *Eternal* felicity, which is no where to be found in this world.

CHAP. II.

What is the beſt Queſtion in the World?

SAint *Matthew* telleth us of a young man that came unto Chriſt, and propounded a queſtion unto him, *Mat.* 19. 16. And Saint *Mark* deſcribeth the manner of his coming to our Saviour, and his good carriage: For, ſaith he, *There came one running and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Maſter, what ſhall I do that I may inherit*

inherit Eternal life? Mark 10. 17. And our Saviours anſwer was. *Thou knoweſt the Commandments: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments,* Matth. 19. 17. At *Philippi a City of Macedonia, the keeper of the Priſon came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,* and moved this queſtion unto them, *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* This was very good queſtion; A better and more profitable could not be moved, But, O good God, where is this queſtion now in the world? The world is full of other queſtions: but this is ſcarce any where ro be heard. Moſt men do now adays betray themſelves by their own queſtions, and bring to light, and ſo make others witneſſes of their ſimplicity, or curioſity, or ſome ſuch hidden diſeaſe of mind. He which maketh diligent ſearch and enquiry where the beſt wine is to be ſold, doth ſufficiently declare what he loves beſt, and where his chiefeſt care is. Another asketh ſuch queſtions as a modeſt man would bluſh to hear: And this man ſhews that his heart is full, and that out of the abundance thereof his mouth ſpeaketh. All mens mouths in all places are full of queſtions, ſuch as theſe are: But it is a rare thing to hear one man ask another this queſtion, Do you think this is the way to heaven? It is a

fault

fault common to every vicious man, but more proper to the libidinous and luſtful, the luxurious and riotous man, though he be plunged into the deep, and begins to ſink, and to be overwhelmed, yet ſeldom or never to enter into a ſerious conſideration with himſelf, and with a ſincere mind ask himſelf this queſtion, Shall I ever think to obtain *Eternal* felicity by this courſe of life? Is this the way to heaven? But of all men thoſe eſpecially leaſt think upon ſuch queſtions as theſe, thoſe I ſay, that live a ſoft life, fare deliciouſly, and wallow in pleaſures, that feel little or no ſorrow and affliction, or if they do at any time feel never ſo little, labour what they can to be ſenſeleſs of it. To ſuffer, they count the greateſt of all evils. If it goes well with them, they care not how it fares with others. If it be well with them for the preſent, they take no care what ſhall follow after. They never once think upon *Eternity*. This is there daily ditty, *The heaven of heavens is the Lords, but the earth he hath given to the ſons of men.* They want neither ſtrength of body or mind, by which to eſcape the hands of men. But God hath long hands, he ſhall ſurely find them out, they muſt appear before him who is the Judge of all the world; they cannot eſcape his judgment; they ſhall ſurely

ſurely ſuffer *Eternal* puniſhments for their wickedneſs and their offences. But if God in his ſecret judgment caſteth away any man as a reprobate, and ſuffereth him to live after his own luſt and pleaſure, he giveth him his portion of proſperity and felicity in this life, he ſpareth him here, that he may puniſh him hereafter. And if at any time he doth any thing that is good, he preſently receiveth his reward. Of ſuch unhappy-happy men the Kingly Prophet thus ſpeaketh, Pſal, 73, 5. *They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men,* Pſal. 106. 39. They go *a whoring with their own inventions.* And this is a moſt miſerable eſtate and condition of life, if there be any. For whom God hath predeſtinated to bring him into the way of *Eternal* happineſs, he ſpareth him not here in this life, but ſcourgeth him daily. I might bring infinite examples to prove this: I will name but one; but the like, I think, hath not been ſeen or heard of in many ages.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

How God punisheth here, that he may spare hereafter. A strange example, the like hath scarce at any time been heard of.

IN the year of our Lord, one thousand one hundred eighty five, *Andronicus* Emperour of the East being overcome and taken prisoner by *Isaac Angelo*, had two heavy iron chains put about his neck, was laden with fetters and shackles, and was most barbarously and despitefully used, and at length in this manner was brought before the forenamed *Isaac*. Before whom complaining of his hard usage, he was delivered over to the multitude to be abused at their pleasure. They being set on fire with anger, thought it a fine thing to be revenged of their enemy: And thus they used him. They buffeted him, they bastinadoed him, they pulled him by the beard, they twicht his hair from his head, they dasht out his teeth, they dragged him in publick, they made him a laughing-stock, they suffered women to beat him with their fists. Then they cut off his right hand; and being thus maimed, they thrust him into the dungeon of thieves and robbers without either meat or drink or any other thing that was necessary, or any one to look

look after him. After a few days they put out one of his eyes and being thus ſhamefully mangled, having one eye put out, and one hand cut off, they put upon him a very ſorry ſhort coat ſhaved his head, ſet him upon a ſcabbed Camel with his face towards the tail, put upon his head a Crown of Garlick, made him hold in his hand the Camels tail inſtead of a Scepter, and ſo they carried him through the market-place very leiſurely with great pomp and triumph. And here the moſt impudent, baſe and vile amongſt the people, like ſavages, after an inhumane ſort fell upon him, nothing at all conſidering that not paſt three days before he was no leſs than an Emperour, Crowned with a royal Diadem, commended, worſhipped, honoured, yea and adored of all men. Nothing at all regarding the oath of Allegiance, they raged and were mad upon him, and their rage and madneſs fitted every man with inſtruments of miſchief againſt him. Some ſtruck him on the head with clubs, others filled his noſtrils with dirt, others ſqueezed ſpunges upon his face, firſt ſoaked in the excrements of man and beaſt, others run him into the ſides with ſpits. Some threw ſtones, others threw dirt at him: ſome called him mad dog, others called him fool and blockhead. An impudent woman running

running out of a kitchin with a kettle of ſcalding water in her hand, poured it upon his head as he paſſed by. There was none which did not ſome miſchief or other to him. At length they brought him to the Theatre to make him a laughing-ſtock, took him down from the Camel, and hanged him up by the heels between two pillars. Thus the poor Emperor having ſuffered a thouſand indignities; yet he bore them patiently, carrying himſelf like a man and a true Chriſtian Champion. He was never heard all the while to lament, or cry out of his hard fortune: for it had been to no purpoſe. He was all the while caſting up his account, which he was to make unto God, and begging pardon for his ſins. He was heard to ſay nothing but only this, and this he ſaid often. *Domine miſerere, Domine miſerere*, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Unhappy *Andronicus*, which waſt compelled to ſuffer ſuch things! But happy in this, that thou didſt ſuffer them ſo patiently, as being the juſt reward of ſin!

When he was hanged up, one would have thought their malice ſhould have ceaſed: but they ſpared him not then, as long as he lived. For they rent his coat from his body: and toſſed him up and down with their hands, tearing him in pieces

pieces with their nails. One more cruel than the reſt run his ſword through his belly and guts as he was hanging. Two others, to try whoſe ſword was ſharpeſt, thruſt him through the back, leaning upon their ſwords with both their hands. Here the moſt miſerable unhappy Emperour with much ado lifted up his maimed hand to his mouth, to put out the blood, as ſome thought, from the freſh and bleeding wound, and ſo ended his life miſerably. After ſome few days he was taken down from the gibbet, and thrown under one of the arches of the Theatre like a beaſt, till ſome that had more humanity in them than the reſt, removed him; but yet notwithſtanding he was not ſuffered to be buried, O *Andronicus*! O thou Emperor of the Eaſt! How much waſt thou bound unto God, whoſe will it was that for a few days thou ſhouldeſt ſuffer ſuch things, that thou mighteſt not periſh for ever! Thou waſt miſerable for a ſhort time, that thou mighteſt not be miſerable for all *Eternity*. I make no doubt but thou hadſt the years of *Eternity* in mind, ſeeing that thou didſt ſuffer ſuch things ſo conſtantly & couragiouſly.

Nicetas Choniates is mine Author, from whom I borrowed this lamentable hiſtory; and he lived about the ſame time, when this happened.

Let us Chriſtians keep always in mind the years of *Eternity*. So whatſoever adverſity or affliction happeneth, we ſhall more eaſily bear it. Every thing is ſhort, if we compare it with *Eternity*. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and Eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Hereupon St. *Auguſtine* crieth out, and prayeth ſo earneſtly, *Domine, hic ure, hic ſeca, modo in æternum parcas*: Lord, *ſear me here, lance me here, ſo thou ſpareſt me hereafter*. And *Fulgentius*, though a moſt holy man, drawing near unto his death, threeſcore and ten days before he died, was often heard to cry out, *Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, & poſtea indulgentiam*; *Lord, grant me patience here, and eaſe hereafter*. Theſe were his words and prayers even to the laſt gaſp. Certain it is, God ſpareth them leaſt of all, whom he determineth to take unto himſelf to dwell with him throughout all *Eternity*.

THE

BRITISH
10 OC 61
MUSEUM

We have a building of God an house not made with hands, ETERNALL in the heavens 2 Cor: 5.1.

Let none wonder at my habitation. I have here a most large palace. of when I think upon the everlasting prisons of hell and the ETERNALL MANSIONS of heaven.

THE SIXTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How the holy Scripture in many places teacheth us to meditate upon Eternity.

THE Kingly Prophet, ſpeaking of the Wicked, ſaith, That they *walk in every ſide*, or *in a circuit*; Pſal. 12. 8. This is their manner of life: they go from feaſt to feaſt, from delights to delights, from wickedneſs to wickedneſs, This is their Circuit. And when they think they have almoſt finiſhed their Circuit of wickedneſs, and gone over the round of their luſt, they begin again, returning ſtill to their former courſe, till death ſteaſeth upon them before they be aware.

The Children of *Job* made this law amongſt themſelves, to feaſt one another round, every one in his courſe. The good man their father obſerved and knew very well, that this their feaſting round, could

not be without ſin: And therefore he *ſent, and ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*, Job 1. 5. As therefore the wicked delight and rejoyce in going the circuit of their pleaſure: So God ſhall appoint them a *circuit* to go, but it ſhall be a *circuit* of torments, and that perpetual and *Eternal*. Bleſſed *David* foreſaw this likewiſe: For ſaith he, *Thine arrows went abroad: The voice of thy thunder was heard in the Heaven*, or, *round about*. Pſal. 77. 17, 18. Famine, War, Peſtilence, Sorrows, Diſeaſes, Calamities, Death it ſelf, and all adverſities whatſoever that happen before the firſt death, are the Arrows of the Lord; but they flie over; they have wings, and they quickly flie from one to another. But the voice of this thunder, the voice of his anger and fury ſhall continually roar in the priſon of Hell, and like a wheel run round without wearing, for all *Eternity*. This wheel, as if it were filled with Gunpowder, when it hath once taken fire, ſhall burn for ever and ever. *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and ſhall burn unto the loweſt Hell*, Deut. 32. 22. There is alſo another *circuit*, and that likewiſe is *Eternal*: from unutterable cold to intolerable heat, and from heat back again to cold, Job 24. 19. *Drought and heat conſume*

ſume the ſnow waters, (ſo ſaith *Job*) and *ſo doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.* St. *Matthew* ſignifieth it more expreſly by the *gnaſhing of teeth, and weeping* of eyes. *Matth.* 12. 13. That we may more fully ſet out this horrible and incomprehenſible wheel, order requireth that we ſhew how the Church agreeth with the holy Scripture in this, as the holy Fathers agree with the Church. We have here divers good admonitions from all theſe, which if we attend unto, we cannot eaſily let *Eternity* ſlip out of our memory.

CHAP. I.

The Anſwers of the holy Fathers and the Church about this.

OF all the holy Fathers which have lived in divers ages, we ſhould do well to hearken unto five eſpecially, *Auguſtine, Chryſoſtom, Gregory, Bernard, Laurentius, Juſtinianus.*

The firſt queſtion here (which yet may ſeem a vain and fooliſh one) is, Which is eaſier, and more tolerable, to ſuffer pain in the head, eyes or teeth; to be troubled with the ſtone; to be pained with the wind Cholick, or *Iliaca Paſſio*, or any other acut diſeaſe; neither to ſleep night

or day, but to be tormented continually without any respite for three days together. The question now is, I say, Which is easier, whether to suffer the pains now mentioned, or else to eat a piece of fish which is made bitter by the breaking of the Gall. This may seem a very ridiculous and most idle question. For, how much bitter is it to eat such a whole fish, rather than suffer those so grievous torments though but one day! The bitterness of the fish will not endanger a mans life, nor make him sick, but leave only a bitter taste in the mouth, which is unpleasing to it. It is truly answered. And yet how many thousands of men make choice rather of the former! For, how often doth the Preacher teach and exhort, cry out and speak plainly! Christian brethren, consider well with your selves, and look about you; the *Eternal* salvation of your souls is in question: If you walk this way, you must assuredly look for *Eternal* torments: Christ hath shewed you another way both by his life and doctrine. Return therefore and repent, you have gone long enough astray. You may if you will have entrance into Heaven; if you be shut out it is your own fault: God is not wanting to those that are willing. It is true indeed, There is some bitterness in using abstinence

nence and fasting, in confessing of sins, in keeping the body under, in setting a strict watch over thy senses, in conquering ones self, in living chastly and continently: This is no easie task: But, let it be what it will, we must suffer it. *Luke* 24. 26. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* Let not a little and short labour terrifie us. It is but for a few years, or it may be but a few days, that we are to do and suffer valiantly; but our joy and rest shall be *Eternal.* He overcometh all, whosoever overcometh and conquereth himself, containeth himself, and resisteth his evil and violent passions; and all this for Christ, for Heaven, for blessed *Eternity.* Christ after his Resurrection found his Disciples eating fish broiled upon the coals: To teach them how great things they should afterwards suffer: and that they were not to think of a soft and easie life, but that they were to be stoned, whipped, crucified, have their skin pulled over their ears; that this was the way to a joyful Resurrection, and to the participation and fellowship of *Eternity* with the blessed; that all other things were small and of no worth in comparison of immortality, and that blessedness, which yet eye hath never seen. These things are often spoken of, but they

are little regarded. This fiſh bitter with the over-flowing of the gall, that is worldly croſſes and the ſufferings of this life, is often ſet before us: but it goeth againſt our ſtomach, we cannot endure to taſt of it. *Eternity* is a thing we often hear of, we often read of, it is continually preached unto us, and often repeated: but we either hear not, or believe not, or regard not, or if we do for a time, the cares of the world ſoon put it out of our minds, and we bury it in oblivion. But again, the Conſcience often plays the Preacher, and recalls to our mind theſe wholſom leſſons, is inſtant, dehorts, reproves; but prevails nothing. All is in vain. For many are ſo obſtinate and perverſe, that neither the Preacher nor their own Conſcience can work upon them. But ſome are ſo impudent, that they will ſet themſelves in oppoſition, and reply thus, *Let it go well with us here and we care not; we neither know nor care what ſhall come hereafter; we are all for preſent profits and pleaſures: no man returneth again from the dead; neither was it ever known that any one came back again out of Hell. Come therefore, let us eat, drink, and be merry, let us enjoy our goods and take our pleaſure.* Theſe are the worldlings Ditties: But let S. *Auguſtine* determine this queſtion, *Melius eſt, modica amari-*

amaritudo in faucibus, quam Æternum tormentum in viſceribus. *Better it is,* ſaith he, *to ſuffer a little bitterneſs in the mouth, than Eternal torments in the inward parts.* It is far better to ſuffer for our offences here in this world, than the world to come. Far better it is for threeſcore years and ten continually together here on earth, to be puniſhed with moſt grievous puniſhments, than to ſuffer the torments of Hell for one day, yea for one hour hereafter. But let us hear what another of the Fathers ſaith.

Saint *Chryſoſtome* propounds the ſecond queſtion after this manner; Suppoſe one night in an hundred years a man ſhould have a ſweet & pleaſant dream, and be after puniſhed an hundred years for it, would he think ſuch a dream were to be deſired? And yet ſaith the Father, as a dream is to an hundred years, ſo is this preſent life to the life to come, yea rather it is much leſs: And as a drop is to the main Ocean, ſo are a thouſand years unto *Eternity.* And in another place. What is there, ſaith he, to be compared unto *Eternity*? What are a thouſand years in compariſon of infinite ages which are yet for to come? Are they not like unto the

Hom. 20 *ad Pop. Antioc.*

Hom. 28 *in Epiſt. ad Hebr.*

the least drop of a bucket compared to a bottomless Well? Look for no end of torments after this life, unless thou repentest before thou departest out of this life: for after death there is no place of repentance, no shedding of tears will profit thee, or do thee any good. Though a man in Hell should gnash his teeth, and blare out his scorched tongue, he shall not obtain so much as a drop of cold water. Grant then that a man should enjoy pleasures all his life long, what is that to infinite ages which are yet for to come? Here in this life all things good and bad have at length an end; but the punishments that shall be suffered hereafter shall have no end. Set fire on the body here, and the soul will soon depart: but after the resurrection, when the body shall be from thenceforth immortal and incorruptible, the soul of the damned shall always burn, and not consume in Hell-fire, They shall rise again, incorruptible indeed: but how? Not to receive a Crown of incorruptible glory, but to suffer *Eternal* torments. But let us hear what another of the Fathers saith.

Saint *Gregory* maketh answer to this common question; Will not drunkenness sooner steal upon a man in the Wine cellar, standing by the hogshead, than in the Par-

Parlour ſitting at the table? The ſpouſe of Chriſt triumpheth in the words of *Solomon*, *He brought me to the Banquetting-houſe* (or as ſome read it, *He brought me into his Wine-cellar*) *and his banner over me was love*, or, *He hath ſet his banner of love over me.* Upon which words St. *Gregory* diſcourſing ſaith thus, By the *Wine-cellar* what can we better or more fitly conceive, than the ſecret contemplation of *Eternity*? For truly whoſoever doth ſeriouſly conſider with himſelf upon *Eternity*, and lets this conſideration ſink deep into his mind, he may truly rejoyce, and triumph with the Spouſe, ſaying, *He hath ſet his banners of love over me*: For he will keep better order in his love, loving himſelf leſs, God more, and even his enemies alſo for Gods ſake. But ſuch is the nature of this profound conſideration, that it will preſently make a man drunk. Make him drunk? How? With the drunkenneſs of the beſt deſires, ſuch as will lead him to amendment of life, carry him to his heavenly Country, and bring him at length to joys *Eternal*. It was caſt in the Apoſtles teeth, that they were drunk with wine: and ſo they were indeed; but it was with wine out of this Cellar. St. *Gregory* hath many excellent conſiderations, and ſayings upon *Eternity*: amongſt others he hath this,

this, whjch is a very ſhort one and a true one, *Momentum quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat, That which delighteth is momentany, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.* Here I could wiſh with *Job*, Job 19. 23, 24. *O that theſe Words were written! O that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with a pen of Iron!* Theſe words, I ſay, *that which delighteth is momentany, but that which tormenteth is Eternal.* The *Book* in which this ſhould be written, is the *heart* of man; the *pen of iron* with which it ſhould be written, is ſerious *meditation*; the *ink* with which it ſhould be written, is the *blood* of *Chriſt.* And theſe words ſo imprinted and ingraven in the breaſt, are then eſpecially to be called to mind, and to be often repeated, when pleaſure fawneth, when luſt provoketh, when luxury inviteth, when the fleſh rebelleth, and the ſpirit faileth, when there is occaſion of ſin offered, and danger of falling into ſin. But let us hear what another of the fathers ſaith.

In the fourth place comes St. *Bernard*: He ſhall anſwer to the queſtion here to be propounded. In the lives of men there is ſuch difference, that almoſt now ſo many men ſo many judgments concerning afflictions There are found ſome ſo grievouſly and continually afflicted, that they are ready

ready to fall down under the croſs, as being too heavy for them to bear. One is oppreſſed with poverty, another is afflicted wich ſickneſs, another is overcharged with ſecret debts, another is tormented with cares, another is grieved and vexed with injuries and ſlanders: every man thinketh that moſt grievous which in preſent he ſuffereth. And many times it cometh to paſs that ſuch as are faint-hearted and impatient, wiſh for death, run into the water, and make haſt to the halter, thinking thereby to find an end of all their griefs and ſorrows, whereas indeed that ſuppoſed end becomes to them but the beginning of their ſorrows, and ſuch ſorrows as never ſhall have end. But with the good and godly it is not ſo: They patiently endure all, ſubmitting themſelves in all things to God's good will and pleaſure. They neither deſire to die quickly, nor yet to live long. Is it God's will they ſhall die? They alſo are willing. Will he have them die quickly? They are willing to that alſo. Will he have them live yet longer? They are not againſt that. What God willeth, that they will: what he willeth not, neither will they. Beſide theſe two kinds of men, there is a third, and that is the greateſt part of men, that deſire to live long: And there is almoſt no man ſo old,

but

but he hopes and desires to live yet another year. These men are never heard to say, they have lived long enough. Death maketh too much hast with them, he commeth to them too soon, yea and before his time. Here now the question may be moved; Who live? or who shall live longer? St. *Bernard* in his seventeenth Sermon upon the 91 Psalm, upon these words, *With long life will I satisfie him*, breaketh forth into this admiration, What is so long as that which is *Eternal*? What is so long as that which shall have no end? Life *Eternal* is the good end which we are all to aim at, and this end is without end. And further he adds, That is the true day indeed after which there follows no night, where there is *Eternal* verity, and true *Eternity*, and therefore true and *Eternal* society. So then the question may be determined thus, That those only shall live a long life truly so called, whosoever shall never die, but always live in heaven; And again, That those shall die in a lingring death (alas! too lingring a death) whosoever shall always die, but ever live in Hell: for they shall live only there to be tormented always. Let us hear but one more, and so conclude.

Laurentius Justinianus shall resolve the last question for us. There are, saith he, many

many things in this world which nature hath ſo appropriated and aſſigned to ſome one certain place, that they are not to be found in another place, unleſs it be in part. Of ſome flowers which grow in the new-found world we have only the ſeed: Of ſome living Creatures there are brought over unto us only the Skins. Now *Eternity* is a thing ſo proper to another world, that it is not to be found in this; only the ſeed thereof we may have even in this world. And what are the ſeeds of *Eternity?* They are ſaith *Laurentius*, *Contempt of a mans ſelf, the gift of Charity, and the taſte of Chriſt's works. To contemn others*, is a tree that over ſpreadeth the whole world whoſe wood is fewel for the fire of Hell. *To contemn* himſelf is a very ſmall ſeed, ſcarce known in the world: Chriſt brought it down from Heaven with him who *made himſelf of no reputation and took upon him the form of a Servant, and become obedient*, not to the Stable only, or the Manger, but even to mount *Calvary*, *unto death, even the death of the Croſs*, unto the grave, yea even unto Hell, ver. 9. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him.* Behold, this little ſeed is grown up and ſpread in breadth, and is become the higheſt of all trees. The ſame Author, ſpeaking of *Charity*, ſaith thus, The meaſure of our *glory* and *Eternal*

nal reward ſhall be according to the meaſure of our *Charity*. For, *To whom little is forgiven the ſame loveth little*, Luk. 7. 47. He obtaineth leſs *grace*, whoſoever hath leſs *Charity*: And where there is leſs *grace*, there alſo ſhall be leſs *glory*. So then it is moſt true, The more thou loveſt God, the more thou heapeſt up unto thy ſelf *Eternal* rewards. The whole Law is *love*, but it muſt be pure, chaſte, and holy. I have done with the ſecond, which is *Charity*. I come to the third, which is *The taſte of Chriſts words*. It is a common and witty ſaying in the Rhetorick Schools, *He is to be thought a good proficient who can reliſh Tully's works*: We may ſay as much in the School of Chriſtianity, *He hath made a good progreſs in Religion and Virtue, who can reliſh Chriſts works, who likes the taſte of Chriſts doctrine and example*. But whoſoever findeth no taſte almoſt at all, no reliſh in the words and works of Chriſt; whoſoever is not moved, affected, and delighted with thoſe things which belong unto the mind, and Chriſtian piety to Heaven, and *Eternal* felicity; but on the contrary findeth much ſweetneſs in eating, drinking, walking, laughing, jeſting and playing: the ſame man may ſay with ſorrow enough, too truly, *How little ſeed of Eternity have I within me, O my God!* Or rather,

rather, *I have none at all.* For when I descend into my self, I see manifestly what spirit is within me, and whither my affection carrieth me. To spend whole nights in dancing, feasting, revelling, quaffing, dicing and carding, hearing foolish and idle tales, reading impure books, calling for, and laughing at amorous songs, playing the good fellow, and doing as the company doth; Oh! this never offendeth me, this is pleasing and delightful to me. But to hear of Christ and his life, to hear of holy men that lived formerly, who were much given to watching, fasting, and prayer, or to read of their lives, that makes no musick in my ears, and this is an eyesore unto me: I can neither hear nor see: I stop mine ears, and close mine eyes for fear lest they should be offended. To hear a Sermon of an hour long, it is death unto me, and therefore I seldom come to Church: or if I do sometimes, I drive away the time, either sleeping or prating. There are too many such men in the world: but of such it may be truly said, that they have no taste or relish at all of the works of Christ. But now let us hear the judgment of the Church concerning *Eternity.*

The memory of *Eternity* is so precious in the esteem of the Church, that there is no

no Psalm, no Prayer, no Hymn but closeth with it, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning*, that is, before all beginning from all *Eternity*, without any beginning *is now, and ever shall be, world without end*, that is, throughout all ages; infinite, innumerable, incomprehensible ages; to all *Eternity*. But let us leave the little rivers, and make haste to the fountain.

CHAP. II.

Clear Testimonies of Divine Scripture concerning Eternity.

I Will produce only three witnesses, a *Prophet*, an *Apostle*, and an *Evangelist*.

How many and how great are the sighs and groans of poor abject and despised men! we may hear them every day. One or other every where is complaining, Wo is me poor man, I have few or no friends at all; I am disrespected: I am scorned and trampled under foot almost by all. Have patience a little, O man, suffer for a while; the day of comfort will rise at length, though it seem long first. Remember

ber Gods promiſe in the Propheſie of *Baruch*, *Caſt about thee a double garment of the righteouſneſs which cometh from God, and ſet a Diadem on thy head of the glory of the Everlaſting.* *Baruch* 3. 2.

Others there are that accuſe Nature, complaining ſtill that ſhe hath given too long a life to ravens and too ſhort a great deal unto man. Hear thus much, you that are ſtill complaining of the ſhortneſs of mans life, This life is ſhort indeed: but when this ſhort and vain life ſhall end, there remains another life which never ſhall have an end, If ye will not believe me, yet believe St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5 2. *For we know*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, Eternal in the heavens.* What great loſs is it then, if this earthly tabernacle of our body be diſſolved, when as we have a Royal palace prepared for us, which is not ſubject to diſſolution? To the teſtimony of the *Prophet* and the *Apoſtle*, let us add the teſtimony of the *Evangeliſt* St. *Matthew*, in whoſe Goſpel we may read theſe words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 18. 8. *If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from thee; It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed,*

rather

rather than having two hands or two feet to be caſt into everlaſting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be caſt into hell fire. O fire! O hell! O *Eternity*! *Time* is nothing, if it be compared with *Eternity*; ſhortneſs of life, and ſo loſs of time is no loſs at all, but great gain, if thereby we gain *Eternity*. Chriſt hath promiſed it, and St. *Matthew* hath recorded it, and ſealed it in theſe words of our Saviour, Matth. 19. 29. *Every one that hath forſaken houſes, or brethren, or ſiſters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my names ſake, ſhall receive an hundred-fold, and ſhall inherit everlaſting life.* Is it not clear enough that this promiſe is of bleſſed *Eternity*, when we have ſecurity given us of receiving an hundred-fold reward? Again, Chriſt according to the ſame *Evangeliſt* forewarning of the latter judgment, three times makes mention of *Eternity* expreſly in theſe words, Matth. 25. 41, 46. *everlaſting fire*, or *eternal fire*, *everlaſting* or *eternal puniſhment*, and *life eternal*.

Seeing therefore the holy Fathers, the Church, and the ſacred Scripture do ſo many ways propound unto us the ſerious conſideration of *Eternity*; it is our part

and

and duty, as many of us as look for *Eternal* life in heaven, it is our part and duty ſeriouſly to meditate thus with our ſelves every one: O my God! How ſeldom have I heretofore thought upon *Eternity*! or if I have thought upon it, in what a cold, and negligent manner have I done it, notwithſtanding every day, yea every hour and minute I draw nearer and nearer unto *Eternity*? But for the time to come by the aſſiſtance of thy *grace* I will mind it more carefully than heretofore I have done; and if at any time through thy bounty, riches ſhall increaſe, I will not ſet my heart upon them: though the world ſhould ſmile upon me, though I ſhould want no temporal thing that my heart can deſire, though I ſhould ſeem to flow in never ſo much abundance, yet will I ſtill remember *Eternity*. In the midſt of my proſperity theſe ſhall be my thoughts. But how long ſhall this laſt? will this fair weather never change? will this comfortable ſun always ſhine upon me? Or if I ſhould live in proſperity all the days of my life, what ſhall it profit me after death? After this ſweet but ſhort, pleaſing but perilous, unhappy happineſs, there ſhall ſhortly follow *Eternity*, *Eternity*. But if the world goes ill with me, if it frown upon me, if I meet with many croſſes, troubles and afflictions, if misfortunes

tunes befal me, if they ruſh upon me like waves, one on the neck of another, if I be turmoiled and toſſed up and down, then theſe ſhall be my daily thoughts. Well, let the world have its courſe, I am content to bear it, Gods will be done. Let the ſea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the winds of afflictions blow, let the waters of ſorrows ruſh upon me, let the clouds of tentations threaten rain and thunder, let the darkneſs of grief and heavineſs compaſs me about, yea though the foundations of the world ſhould ſeem to ſhake, yet will I not be afraid. Theſe ſtorms will blow over, theſe winds will be laid, theſe waves will fall, this tempeſt cannot laſt long, and theſe clouds ſhall be diſpelled. Whatſoever I ſuffer here ſhall ſhortly have an end, I ſhall not ſuffer *Eternally*, Come the worſt that can come, death will put an end to all my ſorrows and miſeries. But no ſtorm to that ſtorm of fire and brimſtone which the damned ſhall ſuffer in Hell *Eternally* and without end. All things here ſhall have an end, but the torments there ſhall have no end. Whatſoever is not within the circle of *Eternity*, is ſhort, ſwift, and momentany, it is but a ſhadow, but a dream, ſo ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*, It is but a *Modicum* or *a thing of nothing, a little, a very little, for a little while*, yea

yea, *a very little while.* Often doth our Saviour beat upon this, ſpeaking to his Diſciples. All his own ſufferings, yea his moſt bitter death upon the croſs, he calleth but a *little.* All the ſufferings, puniſhments, and violent deaths of the Apoſtles, all but a *little*: And why ſhould not I alſo think it but a *little*, whatſoever here I ſuffer, though I ſhould ſuffer it an hundred years together; *Heb.* 7. 27. *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.* I will therefore ſuffer patiently whatſoever can happen, and account one thing only neceſſary, and that is, To do nothing againſt my Conſcience, and diſpleaſing unto God. For all is ſafe and ſure with him who is certain and ſure of bleſſed *Eternity.*

CHAP. III.

This life in reſpect of that which is to come, is but as a Drop *to the* Ocean, *a* little ſtone *to the* ſand *upon the Sea ſhore, a* Center *to the* Circle, *a* Modicum, *a little, a very little time, a* Minute *to* Eternity. *And ſuch are the ſufferings of this life in reſpect of the joys that ſhall be hereafter.*

MOſt true it is, whatſoever labour or ſorrow we ſuffer in this life, it is

but a *Modicum*, or *for a little while*. It is the saying of St. *Augustine*, *This Modicum or little while seems long unto us, because it is not yet all past and gone: But when it shall come to an end, then shall we perceive and understand what a little while this Modicum was.* The wisest of men being to shew the vanity and shortness of this present life, though it should be lengthned to an hundred years: Which few men can reach unto, makes choice of the most minute things in the World, whereby to express it and set it forth by way of resemblance. For thus we read expressly in *Ecclesiasticus*, *The number of a mans days at the most are an hundred years. As a drop of Water unto the Sea, and a Gravel Stone in comparison of the Sand; so are a thousand years to the days of Eternity*, *Eccles* 18. 9, 10. And why then do ye rejoyce in this, ye long lived men, that ye have lived an hundred years? All our years are, What are they? They are *as a drop of Water unto the Sea, and a Gravel Stone, in comparison of the Sand.* And what is a little stone to those exceeding high Mountains of Sand; and what is a small drop of Water to the deep and fathomless Sea? Such are fifty, sixty, yea, an hundred years. (Hear this, ye old Men) They are but a *Modicum*, a very little while, but a *Minute* of time, indeed nothing

nothing at all to the days of *Eternity*. And yet, fooliſh and miſerable men, we are overjoyed with this little ſtone, this ſmall drop. Our life is indeed *a little ſtone*, but no jewel, no precious ſtone; it is made of no better matter than Sand. Our life is a *drop*, but not of ſweet and freſh Water; it is ſalt and brackiſh as the Sea-water is. *For all his days are ſorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh no reſt in the night:* So ſaith the *Preacher*, *Eccluſ.* 2. 23. It is the counſel of St. *Auguſtine*, Recal to mind, ſaith he, the years that are paſt, from *Adam* to this preſent day: Run over all the Scripture; it is but almoſt yeſterday ſince he fell, and was thruſt out of *Paradiſe*. For where are thoſe times that are paſt? Certainly, if thou haſt lived all the time ſince *Adam* was thruſt out of *Paradiſe*, even unto this preſent, thou wouldſt perceive and confeſs, That thy life was not long, which is ſo ſoon fled away. For what is any mans life? Add as many years as thou wilt, imagine the longeſt old age. What is it? Is it not as a Morning blaſt? All this is moſt true. I pray you tell me, where is *Adam* now? where is *Cain?* where is long lived *Methuſelah?* where is *Noah?* where is *Sem?* where is *Eber?* where is moſt obedient *Abraham?* Where is *Jacob?*

where is *Joseph?* They are dead and gone, their time is past: We may say of them, *Vixerunt, fuerunt Troes; Once they were, now they are not.* Thus our life passeth away; thus the glory of the World passeth away. O morning dew! O meer vanity! What is it that we do so desire here? what so long as to be hoped or wished for here? Short it is, a *Modicum* it is, it is vile and nothing worth, it is but a small point whatsoever thine eye beholdeth here. It is a true saying of *Gregory* the Great: The longest measure of our life, is but a point; or it is a short line that begins, continues, and ends in a point. *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,* 1 *Cor.* 15. 52. all things shall have an end. *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad, Psal.* 119. 69. Why then do we account any time long? For that which is past, now is not; that which is to come, yet is not; and what is the present? The Glass is always running, and the Clock never stands still; the hour passeth away by flying minutes. What is flown by, is past and gone; what is yet behind, is still to come: But where is the time which we use to call long? *Bernard* makes often mention of that most true and excellent saying of St. *Jerome,* (and, Reader, it is worth observing.) *No labor*

ought

ought to ſeem long unto us, no time long, in which we are ſeeking after eternal glory.

And yet though the life of Man be but very ſhort in compariſon of *Eternity*, there is none of the damned that can juſtly accuſe God for not granting him a longer life. They muſt condemn themſelves for not living better. *There is no inquiſition in the Grave* (ſaith *Syracides*) *whether thou haſt lived ten or an hundred, or a thouſand years. Eccluſ* 41. 4.

In Hell it is no time to complain of ſhortneſs of life. Every Man hath lived long enough, if he hath lived godly enough.

Here, Chriſtian Brother, I will deal more boldly and plainly with thee, and lay the matter ſo open, that thou ſhalt ſee it clearly preſented before thine eyes. Thou ſayeſt, that thou doeſt often think upon Heaven, and that thou haſt an earneſt and longing deſire after *Eternity*. Sayeſt thou ſo? I hear thee but I do not believe thee; neither would I have thee believe me, if I ſhould ſay ſo of my ſelf. For how can it be, O good Chriſtian Brother, how can it be, that thou or I ſhould think ſo often, and ſo ſeriouſly upon Heaven, and have ſuch a longing deſire (as we ſay we have) after *Eternity*, and yet be ſo lukewarm, yea, ſtone-cold, in Matters of Religion:

so slow and backward to that which is good, so prone and forward to that which is evil, so ready and willing to all manner of wantonness, so querulous and complaining, so slothful and negligent: Where we should be angry, there are we too patient; and where we should be patient and couragious, there are we too faint-hearted and pusillanimous. In the fire of every light affliction, our patience melts and consumes away; nay, we are often cast down with a word, we are blown down with the breath of mans mouth; but never are we more impatient and desperate, then when our wills are crossed. I might speak here of the hot *Apostems* of lust, wherewith our hearts are often inflamed and swoln, and likewise of the devouring *Cancer* of Envy, which often eats into our brests, and makes our flesh consume away; but I pass them by.

Notwithstanding what hath been said, we good and godly men, as we profess our selves, and would have others think us to be, are too timorous where we should be bold, and too bold where we should be timorous. Glory in nothing more then in this, That we have often in our minds the hearty desires, the joys of *Eternity*. Believe it, it is not credible, that the thoughts

thoughts of heaven and *Eternity* ſhould be ſo often in our minds as we ſpeak of, and yet mean while that we ſhould live no better than we do. Did I ſay, it is not credible? Nay I ſay, it is impoſſible. And thus I ſhall declare it.

The Patriarch *Jacob* ſerved his Uncle *Laban* for his daughter *Rachel* ſeven years, *And they ſeemed to him but a few dayes for the love that he bare to her*, Gen. 29. 20. Heareſt thou this whoſoever thou art that ſo complaineſt? Thou ſerveſt no impoſtor or deceiver as *Laban* was, but God thy maker, and him that will ſurely keep his covenant and promiſe. Thou ſerveſt not for a wife, but for the Kingdom of heaven: not for the beauty and ſight of a wife, but for the beatifical viſion and *Eternal* ſight of God: not for the delight and pleaſure of a wife, but for cœleſtial and *Eternal* delights and pleaſures. And yet doth the trouble of one winters day oftentimes ſo caſt thee down, that ſuddenly all thy love towards God and thy deſire after heaven begins to wax cold in thee. As ſoon as the ſtorm of adverſity begins, thou breakeſt forth into moſt bitter complaints; thou calleſt heaven and earth to witneſs, thou breatheſt nothing but revenge; yea oftentimes, I believe thou ſpareſt not God himſelf, but calleſt his juſtice into

queſtion. At other times when pleaſure w th her fawning allurements hath once enticed thee, ſhe doth ſo bewitch thee and take away thy memory, that thou quite forgetteſt to ſerve God, and ſo runneſt headlong into the *Labyrinth* of ſin, which hath a fair entrance, at leaſt ſeemingly, but leadeth thee the next way to deſtruction. Is this the vigilancy which thou ſo much talkeſt of? Is this thy heroical fortitude and love of God? How wilt thou ſerve God ſeven years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, when (alas!) thou canſt not endure the labour and ſorrow of one ſhort day? Mark 14. 37. *O Simon, Simon, ſleepeſt thou; couldſt thou not watch one hour* with thy Lord and Maſter? but hear further concerning the Patriarch *Jacob*: He being beguiled by his Uncle *Laban*, who gave him blear-eyed *Leah* inſtead of beautiful *Rachel*, ſerved him yet ſeven years more for his daughter *Rachel*, whom he dearly loved: and no doubt but thoſe ſeven years alſo ſeemed unto him but as a few days for the exceeding great love that he had unto her. And it is very likely that oftentimes when he was weary at his work he had an eye unto *Rachels* beauty, and ſaid thus with himſelf, (ſurely, for her beauty) She is worthy for whom I ſhould ſuffer ſeven years hard ſervice; and, if need were

were, I would not ſtick to ſerve yet ſeven years more. Such was the affection that he bore unto *Rachel*, that it made him ſcarce ſenſible of any labour.

Heareſt thou this, thou who goeſt for a Souldier of Chriſt? conceiveſt thou this, underſtandeſt thou this? How then canſt thou ſtill murmure againſt God? Thou art bid to ſerve God for Gods ſake, that ſo thou mayeſt at length enter into Gods *Eternal* reſt; Thou art exhorted to tolerance and patience here, that ſo thou mayeſt be made partaker of immortality with the bleſſed hereafter: And yet ſleepeſt thou, O ſluggard? Haſt thou not an ear to hear? Art thou ſtill complaining? *Do but reckon up the years which thou haſt ſpent in the ſervice of God, and ſee* whether thou haſt ſerved God faithfully and painfully twenty years, as *Jacob* did *Laban*, I am afraid thou wilt come ſhort in thy reckoning: Haſt thou ſerved God ſo many months? I tell thee, I make queſtion of it. Number the nights that thou haſt ſpent in watching and praying, recount the days which thou haſt ſpent in holy exerciſes, and ſee if thou canſt truly ſay unto God as *Jacob* did to *Laban*, *In the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night, and my ſleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy houſe: I*

ſerved thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and ſix years for thy cattel; Gen. 31. 40, 41. Tell me, Chriſtian man, haſt thou ſerved God thus twenty years? Thou knoweſt thy wages if thou ſerveſt God; Not *Labans* daughters, nor flocks of ſheep; God himſelf ſhall be the reward of thy ſervice: Thou ſhalt be bleſſed both in ſoul and body; It ſhall be well with thee on every ſide; Thou ſhalt enjoy all manner of delights; great delights without either lacking or loathing, and without end. Thou ſhalt ſwim in the bottomleſs *Ocean* of pleaſures: And yet (behold) thy hands are ſlack to every good work; Thy feet are ſlow to go to Church; thy heart conſumes away with envy, flames with anger and revenge, aboundeth with the vermine of filthy thoughts, and is quite dead through ſlothfulneſs and impatience. Is this thy ſerving of God? Is this the way, thinkeſt thou to heaven, to immortal life, to *Eternal* bleſſedneſs? Surely it is not. Why doſt thou not rather as *Jacob* did, when thou art weary with any labour which thou undergoeſt in the ſervice of God, when the world goes ill with thee, when adverſity preſſeth thee, proſperity ſeduceth thee, and labours burthen thee, lift up thine eyes to heaven, behold *Rachel*, who is promiſed unto thee, and thus comfort

up

up thy ſelf. Be not troubled, O my ſoul: Behold thy *Rachel*, thy *Rachel*, which is in heaven, fair *Rachel*, comely *Rachel*; *Rachel* that is all beautiful, not having any one blemiſh about her! Behold heaven, and the houſe of thy *Eternal* reſt and pleaſure! Be content to ſuffer for a while, a little ſorrow, and ſome pains: For thou ſhalt ſhortly be where thy *Rachel* is; and there thou ſhalt be the more joyful and bleſſed, by how much the more thou art here ſorrowful and afflicted: There ſhall thy reſt be the more pleaſant and joyful, by how much the more thy life here is heavy and painful. Well then, be of good courage, ſhew Chriſtian fortitude and patience. *Eternity*, bleſſed *Eternity* is more worth, infinitely more worth, than all that we can do or ſuffer: If thus, O Chriſtian brother, thou wouldeſt animate and encourage thy ſelf, if with ſuch eyes thou wouldſt oftner look up to heaven, if with ſuch affection thou wouldeſt daily think upon *Eternity*; believe it, all the days of ſervice here on earth would ſeem but few, for the great love which thou wouldeſt have unto *Eternity*; Thou wouldeſt count all labour eaſie, all troubles welcome, all loſſes gain. This I will ſay, and therewith

with I will conclude, The more a man thinks upon the *Eternity* of the world to come, the more care he will take here to lead a godly life in this present world.

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Thus saith the high and loftie one, that inhabiteth ETERNITIE.

Adam lost ETERNITIE, Christ regained it: to this the Angels invite us from this the devils withdraw us have a care whether thou followest.

THE SEVENTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How Chriſtians uſe to paint Eternity.

HE that is to go through an houſe in the dark muſt go warily and leiſurely, ſtep after ſtep, and he muſt grope for the wall. If mans underſtanding will be prying into *Eternity*, if he thinks here in this life to enter into it, he is much deceived: The way is dark and full of difficulties. He may hurt himſelf by the way, but he ſhall never here attain unto it. The way thither is but ſhort indeed: but when a man is once in, there is no coming out again. And yet though no mortal man can ſo conceive of *Eternity*, that he can certainly ſay what it is, notwithſtanding the infiniteneſs thereof is ſhadowed out by certain pictures and reſemblances, in ſuch manner that every man may have a glimpſe of it. Whatſoever

ever we ſpeak or write concerning *Eternity*, howſoever we ſet it out in colours; all is but a ſhadow, yea a ſhadow of ſhadows: No *Orator* in the world can with all his Rhetorick, ſufficiently expreſs it; No *Limner* with all his curious art and skill can ſet it forth to the life. If all times that ever were and ever ſhall be ſhould be put together, they would infinitely come ſhort of *Eternity*: The latitude thereof is not to be meaſured, neither by hours, nor days, nor weeks, nor months, nor years, nor *Luſtra*'s, nor *Olympiads*, nor *Indictions*, nor *Jubilees*, nor *Ages*, nor *Plato's years*, nor by the moſt ſlow motions of the *Eighth Sphere*, though theſe were multiplied by a thouſand, or a million, or the greateſt multiplier or *Number numbering* that can be imagined. Neither can it be meaſured by any *Number numbered*, as by the Stars of Heaven, the Sands of the Sea, the Graſs of the Field, the Drops of the River, and ſuch like. The number of *Eternity* is paſt finding out.

The Sailers uſe to ſound the depth of the Sea by a Plummet and a Line: Let us alſo let down the Plummet and Line of our humble and reverent cogitations, to ſound the depth of *Eternity*, which yet is paſt finding out. But if we will go by this *Map*, if we will ſail by this *Card*, if we

we will view well this *Picture*, we ſhall come much nearer finding it, than otherwiſe we ſhould.

Chriſt as a Child, taken as it were from the Manger and the Cradle, almoſt quite naked, and without clothes, *ſtands in the clouds: on his ſhoulders he bears a Croſs: in the clouds* there is this inſcription, *ETERNITY: beneath Chriſts feet*, down upon the earth there is the *Sceleton* of a man, or nothing but the bones of a man without hair or skin, only he hath a beard to be known by: *in his left hand* he holdeth a *piece of parchment*, in which theſe words are written, *Momentaneum quod delectat: That which delighteth is momentary: in his right hand* he holdeth up an *Apple*. Near unto him there ſtandeth a *Raven* pecking a ſhell-fiſh, with this ſubſcription, *Cras, Cras, To Morrow, To Morrow. The earth opens her mouth, and flames of fire break forth* and tend aloft, in which theſe words are written, *Æternum quod cruciat, That which tormenteth is Eternal.* *Chriſt* coming down from the clouds *Two adore* with bended knees of divers ſex, in the place of all mankind. *Behind them* there is a running *Hour Glaſs*, or a *Dial* meaſuring hours by the running of water, called a *Clepſydra*; and a *Book* lying

Gregor.

Gregor.

lying wide open. One one page there is written. *They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave.* Job 21. 13. On the other page, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Before them stands *Two* heavenly *Angels*, which embrace them with their arms; and pointing at Christ bid them lift up their eyes unto him. This is the *Picture*: The meaning followeth.

CHAP. I.

Christ inviting.

CHrist the *Eternal* Son of the *Eternal* God came into this world, clad with no other garment than we, that is, stark naked. The garment of immortality and innocency we lost by *Adams* disobedience. And now (alas!) how miserably arrayed do we come into this world? Christ together with us, yea for us, suffereth punishment and yet was not guilty of any sin. But what meaneth this *Cross upon the Shoulders* of the Son of God? It is a bed on which he slept in death, *Golgotha* was his chamber. The Thorns his pillow, and the Cross his bed. Which many religious men of former times well considering

ſidering with themſelves, have voluntarily and freely choſen to lie hard and take little reſt, that at the day of Reſurrection they might riſe joyfully to reſt *Eternal*. Some, as we may read, have made the Earth their Mattreſs, Sackcloth their Sheet, and a Stone their Boulſter. And many there are which do ſo ſtill to this day, But I leave them, and return to Chriſt. He ſuffered *death, even* that moſt bitter and ſhameful *death of the Croſs*. To what end? That he might ſave us from death *Eternal*. Dye we muſt all of us; but our death is but ſhort. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye the ſoul is ſnatched from the body, and this is all that which we call *Death*. But it is not ſo with them in Hell: Their torments far exceed all the ſorrows and pangs of death, not only becauſe there are more grievous for their quality, but alſo becauſe they are of longer continuance beyond all compariſon; for they are *Eternal*. So then their torments are, always to be tormented; and their death, to dye always. And from this death hath Chriſt the Son of God delivered us; the *Child* that we ſee deſcribed walking amidſt the clouds. Under his feet is a bare *Sceleton*, or the bare bones of a man, which by all ſigns we may gather to be our forefather *Adams*. Hearken

ye

ye children, and ye childrens children, hearken unto the words of your Fore-father *Adam* thus speaking unto you.

CHAP. II.

Adam lamenting.

O My Children, happy then indeed, if your Fore-father had known his own happiness, but now miserable, and that even in this, because mine. By me were you destroyed before you were begotten; by me were you damned before you were brought forth. I fain would be as God, and by that means I am left scarce a man. Before you could perish, you all perished in me. I my self do not know, whether you may better call me a Father, or a Tyrant, and a Murderer. I cannot wonder or complain justly that you are so vicious and so sinful; for you learned it of me. I am sorry that you are so disobedient; but this you learned also of me. I was first disobedient unto God that made me. The Angels in Heaven blush and are ashamed to see your Gluttony and Intemperance; but this is your Fathers fault. Your pride hath made you odious and detestable before God;

God; but this Monſter firſt conquered and triumphed over me, and ſo Pride became more proud than ſhe was before. This is the inheritance you receive from me, nothing elſe but an heap of miſeries. God indeed of his free good will gave unto me by a ſure promiſe Heaven for an Inheritance, and intailed it upon you: But I have undone you all, cut off the Intail, and prodigally made away all for one bit. I valued my Wife and an Apple more than you all, more than Heaven, more than God. A curſed and unhappy Dinner, for which I deſerved to Sup in Hell many thouſand years after. I lived in *Paradiſe*, a Garden full of all delight and pleaſure beyond imagination: God gave me the free uſe of all things therein, only the fruit of one Tree was forbidden me. I was Lord of all the Creatures, I was wiſe and beautiful, ſtrong and luſty. I abounded with all manner of delights. The Air was then as temperate as could be deſired; the Clouds were clad in bright blew: the Heaven ſmiled upon us; the Sun did ſhine ſo pure, that nothing could be more. All things ſeemed to gratifie us at our new marriage. Our eyes could behold nothing but that which was flouriſhing and pleaſing to them. Our ears were continually filled with muſick,

the

the Birds those nimble Choristers of the Air ever warbling out their pleasant ditties. The Earth of it self brought forth odoriferous Cinnamon and Saffron. I was compassed about with pleasures on every side. I lived free and remote from all care, sorrow, fear, labour, sickness, and death. I seemed to be a God upon Earth The Angels in Heaven rejoyced to see my happiness; there was none that did envy me, but my self; but because I obeyed not the voice of God, all these evils fell upon me.

I was driven out of *Paradise*, banished from the sight of God, and for shame I hid my face. Labor, sorrow, mourning, fears, tears, calamities, a thousand miseries seised upon me, and quite wearied me out: You feel it, as many as are of my family; and that which seemeth to be the end of all temporal misery and sorrow, is oftentimes the beginning of Eternal.

O my Children, learn by your own woful experience, learn by your own loss and mine; learn, I say, to be wise at length. I will give you but one lesson, and it is but in three words, which you shall do well to learn by heart, and that is, *To hate sin.* Behold! Do you not see *a grievous flame* breaking out hard by me?

me? It hath burnt ever ſince ſin firſt entred into the World, and ſhall never be put out. All other puniſhments are but light, and ſhall ſhortly have an end; but the damned ſhall be tormented in this flame, for ever and ever. Now, if we will, we may eſcape it. Heaven is ſet open to all; but there is no coming to it, but by the way of Repentance, and the gate of the Croſs. He that walketh in this way, and entreth in at this gate, may be certain of his Salvation, and eternal joy in the Kingdom of Heaven, where he ſhall have an everlaſting habitation. This is the counſel of *Adam* to his children, I ſay it is *Adam*'s counſel.

Who falling once, did make his children all
Both guilty of his puniſhment and fall.

CHAP. III.

The Ravens croaking.

NEar unto the *Sceleton* of the *Protoplaſt*, or the bare bones of the firſt Man that God made, is the *Ravens* place in the Picture, which maketh very much for the repreſentation of *Eternity* to the life. It is a well-known ſaying of St. *Auguſtine*, *Cras*, *Cras*, that is, *To Morrow*

To

To morrow, is the voice of the Raven: Mourn therefore like a Dove, and beat thy breſt. The chiefeſt cauſe, that I conceive, why moſt men loſe their part and portion of *Bleſſed Eternity*, is becauſe they ſeek it not *To day*, but defer the ſeeking of it till *To morrow*. For what is more frequent or ordinary, than putting off repentance till *To morrow*, *To morrow*, which God doth know we are uncertain, whether we ſhall live to ſee or no? But that we may not ſeem to put it off without ſome fair pretence we make many fair promiſes unto God.

I will To morrow, *that I will,*
I will be ſure to do it ;
To morrow *comes*, To morrow *goes* ;
And ſtill thou art to do it.
Thus ſtill repentance is deferr'd
From one day to another :
Until the day of Death is come,
And Judgment is the other.

But the day of promiſe is ſo long a coming, that the day of Death often preventeth it, and we are ſuddenly ſnatcht away; and ſwallowed up of *Eternity*, and ſo plunged into the gulf; miſerable men that we are, into the gulf of everlaſting horror and deſpair. This is it that undoeth

eth many, saith S. *Augustine*; whilest they cry, *Cras, Cras, To morrow, To morrow*, the gate is suddenly shut against them. Therefore the Son of *Sirach* often calleth upon us to this purpose, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day: For suddenly shall the wrath of God come forth, and in thy security thou shalt be destroyed, and perish in the day of vengeance, Eccles* 5. 7. It was truly said of *Seneca*, that *Roman* Philosopher, A great part of our life we spend in doing ill; the greatest part in doing nothing; but all in doing another thing, rather than that we should. Not unlike to *Archimedes*, who when *Syracuse* was taken, was sitting secure at home, and drawing Circles with his Compass in the Dust. For do we not see most men, when the Eternal Salvation of their Souls is in question, handling their Dust, and stretching themselves to their furthest compass, set upon the Tenter-hooks, as it were, and distracted with Law-suits, Money-matters, worldly businesses, and labors that shall nothing profit them at the last? *Eternity* is a thing they never once think of, or else very seldom, and then but slightly for a snatch and away, as Dogs are said to lap at *Nilus*, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one*

thing is needful, Luk. 10. 41. and that is *Beatitude* or *Bleſſedneſs* : Not that on Earth, which ſuch as it is, is yet but ſhort ; but that in Heaven , which is *Eternal.*

Before we take any buſineſs in hand, we commonly examine it at this well known rule, ſaying, *Is it worth my pains, Shall I get my Bread by it* ? Should not a Chriſtian man rather in the beginning of every work, ſit down and ſay with himſelf, *Shall I gain Heaven by it ? Will it any thing further me in the way to Bleſſed Eternity* ? We do not love to trouble our heads with ſuch *Quæres* as theſe ; we put off the hearing of them till another time ; we do adjourn it from one time to another and another, and ſtill another ; and at the laſt day of the Term, we will grant a hearing. Fooliſh men ? When at laſt we are not able to labor, then we firſt begin to think of labor. When we muſt needs depart out of this World, then we begin to think upon another World. When we can live no longer here, then we begin to think of the life to come hereafter. When the hour-glaſs of our ſhort time is run out, then we begin to think of *Eternity.* When there is no time left for repentance, then preſently we will repent. When the Gate is ſhut, then we knock. But this is the

the fault of all ſinners in general, ſtill to defer their repentance from day to day. Every ſinner is ready to ſay, (ſaith S. *Auguſtine*) *I cannot now, I will another time.* Alas! Alas! *If another time, why not now?*

Dionyſius, King of *Sicily*, diſrobing *Apollo* of his Cloth of Gold, ſaid thus, *Nec æſtati nec hyemi veſtis hæc convenit. It is a wear neither fit for Winter nor Summer.* In Summer it is too heavy, and in Winter it is too cold. So do many (ſaith S. *Ambroſe*) play with God, and deceive their own Souls. They ſay, Let a young man live according to the faſhion of the World; let him drink and dance; let him go to the Horſe-race, and to the Wreſtlers; let him go a courſing in the fields with his companions. It is for old men to ſtay at home, and not to ſtir abroad, unleſs it be to Church. This is too melancholy a life for a young man. But when they grow old, what do they then? Then are they old and ſickly, weak and feeble: You muſt not look for theſe things of them at that age; their ſtrength will not permit: It is not with them as formerly it hath been; you muſt give them leave to take their eaſe; let them have a care of their health: This is all they have to do.

Thus we let the Summer and Winter of our age pass away, and never once think of the Eternal Spring. But let us remember our selves, and *as we have opportunity let us do good*, *Gal.* 6.10. But let not our song be any more, with the Black Raven, *Cras*, *Cras*, *To morrow*, *To morrow*, and so let, *To day*, and *To morrow*, and the next, and so our whole life pass away, and *Eternity* overtake us before we are aware. *To morrow* is not, *To day* only is ours. So saith S. *James*, *Go to now, ye that say, To day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is our life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, *Jam.* 4. 13. It was a very good answer that *Messodanus* gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day, (as it is reported by *Guido Bituricensis.*) My Friend, saith he, why dost thou invite me against *to morrow*? I durst not for these many years secure my self, that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour. No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it. What is it else, but rashness and folly, folly and madness, and indeed meer contempt of *Eternity*, for a man to lie down in ease upon

upon a Feather-bed, to ſleep ſecure, ſnorting and ſnoring, and to lodge an enemy, a deadly Enemy, all the while, in, in his very boſom? Sudden deaths are very common and ordinary amongſt us. How many have we heard of, that went to Bed well over night, for ought any man could tell, and were found dead in the morning! I will not ſay carried away out of their Beds, and caſt into Hell fire; whether it be ſo or no, God knoweth. Have we not ſeen and known ſome that have been ſuddenly ſtruck, faln ſick, and died in the ſpace of an hour? Within an hour? yea leſs than an hour, ſound and ſick, quick and dead. And yet do we (raſh and fooliſh men) procraſtinate it from day to day (that is nothing) from year to year do we defer our repentance, and the amendment of our lives; and death mean time unexpected ſeiſeth upon us, and delivereth us up unto *Eternity*. S. *Auguſtine*, correcting in himſelf ſuch lingering and dangerous delay, ſuch lenitude and backwardneſs of mind and will to repent, ſaith thus, *I felt and found how I was held intangled, and I uttered ſuch lamentable complaints as theſe*, Quamdiu, quamdiu, Cras & Cras? Quare non hæc hora finis turpitudinis meæ? *How long ſhall I defer, and ſtill cry* To morrow, To morrow?

Why do I not now begin, even this very preſent hour? Why do I not break off my ſinful courſe, and begin to live better? Thus I ſpake and fell a weeping for very contrition of heart.

Anthony the Great (as S. *Jerome* witneſſeth) when he uſed exhortations to the people to ſtir them up to godlineſs and virtue, was wont to wiſh them always to keep in mind, and often meditate upon that ſaying of the Apoſtle, *Sol non occidat ſuper iracundiam veſtram. Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* And this prohibition he did not reſtrain to wrath only, but made it general: Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, hatred, malice, envy, luſt, or any other ſin, leſt it depart from you as a witneſs againſt you.

John, Patriarch of *Alexandria*, had a certain controverſie with one *Nicetas*, a chief Man of that City. The matter was to be tried at Law, *John* was for the poor, *Nicetas* for his money. But for peace ſake there was a private meeting and hearing appointed, to ſee if they could come to ſome compoſition and agreement. They met, they fell to words, they were hot at it, a great deal of choler and ſtomach was ſhown on both parts, neither would yield a jot, neither would depart an inch from his right. A great conflict there was be-

between them, many hours ſpent to little purpoſe: They were further off from Agreement, at length, then before; for neither would yield to Conditions propounded by either. Well, it grew late, they departed more offended and diſpleaſed one with another, than before, and ſo left the ſuit pendent. *Nicetas* thought it hard caſe to part with his money, and the Patriarch ſeemed to be in the right, and to ſtand out in the Cauſe of God, and the Poor. But yet when *Nicetas* was gone, the good Biſhop weighed the matter better with himſelf, and condemned himſelf for his pertinacy; and though he was in a good cauſe, and knew it alſo, yet ſaid, Can I think that God will be well pleaſed with this implacable wrath, and wilful ſtubbornneſs? The night draweth on: And ſhall I ſuffer the Sun to go down upon my wrath? That is impious, and not according to the counſel of the Apoſtle. So the good Prelate could not be at reſt till he had ſent unto *Nicetas*: For he out of hand ſent Meſſengers of good eſteem, and gave them this charge, that they ſhould ſay no more to him but only this *Domine, Sol ad occaſum eſt*, that is, *Sir, the Sun is going down.* Upon the hearing of which meſſage, there was ſuch a ſudden alteration wrought in *Nicetas*, that his

high stomach came down presently, he began to melt, his eyes did stand full swoln with tears, and he had much ado to keep them in. Out of doors he ran presently after the Messengers (for he made haste to speak with the Patriarch) and coming to him in humble manner, saluted him thus, *Holy Father, I will be ruled by you in this, or in any other matter.* Whereupon the Patriarch made him very welcome; so they embraced each other very lovingly, and became good friends. Great surely was the virtue, and speedy was the operation of these few words, *The Sun is going down*: For presently upon the hearing thereof, a peace was concluded betwixt them, which was sought for before with multitude of words, but could not be effected. So do thou, whosoever thou art that knowest thy self guilty of any grievous sin, if not before, towards the evening, at least, call to mind those operative words, *The Sun is going down.* For what knowest thou, whether thou shalt rise again with the Sun, or no? And if thou diest in the night without Repentance, it is a question in which *Eternity* thou shalt have thy part, whether of the blessed, or of the cursed. Wherefore do what thou hast to do quickly, *The Sun is going down.* But have a care it go not down upon thy lust

or

or luxury, envy or blaſphemy, detraction or theft, or upon any other grievous ſin unrepented of. Good God! What a thing is this? If there be but a ſtain in a garment, a ſpot in the face, a blot in a cap, we preſently uſe ſome means to take it out, or waſh it off. Are theſe ſuch eye-ſores to us? And yet are we ſo blind within, that we cannot ſee our manifold corruptions and pollutions? or do we ſee and ſuffer them? Can we ſuffer them, and not be troubled at them? Are we troubled, and yet ſeek no means to expiate and purge them out? When we are polluted at any time with the ſtain of ſin, we ſhould labour preſently to take it out; the ſooner it is done, the better and the eaſier it is. Therefore, ſaith S. *Ambroſe*, *we ought to be careful to repent*: But that is not all, our repentance muſt be alſo ſpeedy, for fear leſt the Heavenly Husbandman in the Goſpel, that planted a Fig-tree in his Vineyard, come and ſeek for fruit, and finding none, ſay unto the Dreſſer of his Vineyard, *Cut it down.* If the ſentence be once paſt, there is no avoiding the fatal blow; down it muſt. If therefore we find our ſelves once wounded with ſin, let us look for help in time. The brute beaſts which have no underſtanding, will teach us ſo much

providence. The Harts of *Candy* or *Crete*, as soon as they are struck, run presently to their *Dictamnum* or Dittany: The Swallows, to cure the blindness of their young ones eyes, flie to fetch their *Chelidonium* or Celandine: The Dog, when he is sick, maketh haste to his Grass, to give him a vomit: The Toad fighting with the Spider, as soon as she feeleth her self begin to swell, crawleth to her *Plantane*, and so is recovered.

These by a natural instinct, know their own proper Medicines, and upon all occasions presently make recourse unto them. But we poor miserable Men, more unreasonable, and without understanding than the Beasts, are wounded every day, and that many times deadly; and yet notwithstanding we seek for no Medicine to cure our Spiritual Diseases. We use the same diet we were wont to do; we talk as freely and merrily as ever we did; we go to Bed at our accustomed hour, and sleep according to our old compass. But *Repentance* is the Physick that goeth against our stomachs, *Contrition* cutteth us to the heart, *Confession* seemeth bitter in our mouths: We chuse rather to continue sick, then to be cured. This is our miserable condition; so fooliſh are we, and void of understanding, either not knowing,

knowing, or at leaſt, not imbracing that which would make for our Eternal good.

If we would give ear unto the counſel of the *Heavenly Angels*, which ſeem in the Picture according to their deſcription, to give direction unto us, and are indeed appointed by God, as Miniſtring Spirits for our Good; If we would, I ſay, give ear unto their counſel, then certainly we ſhould neither ſuffer our eyes to ſleep, nor our eye-lids to ſlumber, neither the temples of our heads to take any reſt, until our peace and reconciliation were made with God. They put us ſtill in mind, that our day is almoſt ſpent, that the night draws on, that our glaſs is near running out, that death is at hand, and after death cometh judgement: But we ſecurely walk on in our old way. Let the day ſpend, let the night draw on, let the glaſs run out; come death, follow judgment; we are not troubled at it, we care not, we regard not, no warning of the *Angels* will ſerve our turn.

We ſweetly ſleep, and never dream of this.
Unhappy man whoſoever thou art!

—Potes hoc ſub caſu ducere ſomnos?
And canſt thou ſleep in ſuch a caſe as this?

Canſt

Canſt thou go to Bed, with a Conſcience thus laden with ſin? Canſt thou take any reſt when thou lieſt in danger of Eternal Death? Canſt thou lodge in the ſame Bed with the Brother of Death, and enter ſleep into thy boſom? I can, I tell thee, that I can, and find no harm at all by it. Be not too confident; that may happen in the ſpace of one hour, which hath not happened in a thouſand. Thou art not paſt danger; for conſider with thy ſelf how long thou haſt to live. There is no great diſtance betwixt thy Soul and Death, Hell and *Eternity*. It is gone in a breath. Thou mayeſt moſt truly ſay every hour, I am within one degree of Death, within one foot, yea, within one inch. Death need not ſpend all his Quivers upon thee: One Arrow, the head of one Arrow ſhall wound thee to the heart, and make ſuch a large orifice, that blood and ſpirits, and life and all, ſhall ſuddenly run out together. Either thou liveſt in a malignant and corrupt Air, or elſe thou art troubled with diſtillations falling down from thy Head upon thy Lungs, or elſe there is ſome obſtruction in the Veins, or in the Liver, or elſe the Vital Spirits are ſuffocated, or elſe the Pulſation of the Arteries is intercepted, or elſe the Animal Spirits run back

back to their Head, and there are either frozen to death, or elſe drowned. One way or other thou poſteſt to the end of thy ſhort race; and preſently thou art but a dead man, carried away to *Eternity* in the turning of a hand, before thou couldſt imagine or think upon it. There are a thouſand ways to bring a Man to his end: I do not ſpeak of lingring Deaths, before which there goes ſome *warning*, but of ſudden Deaths that ſummon us, arreſt us, and carry us away all in a moment. He dies *ſuddenly* that dies unpreparedly. Death is not ſudden, if it be foreſeen and always expected. That is *ſudden death* which was unpremeditated; and unpremeditated death, is the worſt of all deaths: And from ſuch ſudden death, *Good Lord deliver us.* It is good counſel for every one, let him be of what age he will, for no age is priviledged more than another: Death hath a general commiſſion which extends to all places, perſons, ages, there is none exempt. It is good counſel then, I ſay, for every one at all times, and in all places, and in all companies to expect death, and to think every day, yea, every hour to be his laſt: Then let him die, when pleaſe God, he ſhall not die ſuddenly.

How

How many Men have we heard of, whoſe light hath ſuddenly been put out, and life taken away, either by a fall, or the halter, or poyſon, or ſword, or fire, or water, or Lions paws, or Boars tusks, or Horſe heels, and a thouſand more ways than theſe! As many Senſes as we have, (that number is nothing.) As many parts and members as we have, (and yet that is nothing.) As many Pores as there be in all the parts of our Body put together, ſo many windows are there for death to creep in at, to ſteal upon us, and ſuddenly cut our throats. *Thou waſt born* (ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*) *that is ſure: For thou ſhalt ſurely die. And in this that thy death is certain, the day alſo of thy death is uncertain.* None of us knows how near he draws unto his end: *I know not* (ſaith *Job, chap.* 32. 12.) *how long I ſhall live, and how ſoon my Maker may take me away*; or (as our Tranſlation hath it) *I know not to give flattering titles; in ſo doing, my Maker would ſoon take me away.* In the midſt of our life, we are near unto death: For we always carry it in our boſom; and who can tell, whether he ſhall live till the evening or no? This murderer and man-ſtealer (for ſo I call Death) hath a thouſand ways to hurt us, as by thunder and lightning, ſtorms and tempeſt, fire and water, *&c.*

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Inſtruments of miſchief he hath of all ſorts, as Guns, Bows, Arrows, Slings, Spears, Darts, Swords, and what not? We need not be beholding to former ages for examples of ſudden deaths. Alack! we have too many in our own days. Have not we our ſelves know many, that laying themſelves down to ſleep, have fallen in ſuch a dead ſleep, that they are not to be awaked again, till they ſhall hear the ſound of the Trumpet at the laſt day? Death doth not always ſend his Heralds and Summoners before, to tell us of his coming, but often ſteals upon us unexpected; and as he finds us, ſo he takes us, whether prepared or unprepared. *Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour*, *Matth.* 25. 13. There is a kind of Repentance indeed in Hell: But neither is it true, neither will it profit any thing at all. For it is joyned with everlaſting, and tormenting horror and deſpair. *Now*, now is the acceptable time of Repentance, *now whileſt it is called to day*, Heb. 3. 13. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance*, Matth 3 8. *The night cometh when no man can work*, Joh. 9. 4. Work therefore while it is day. The day, ſaith *Origen*, is the time of this life; which may ſeem long unto us, but indeed is very ſhort, if it be compared with *Eternity*.

And

And after this ſhort day, of this preſent life, there follows the day of *Eternity*, which is infinite long, and hath no night to come after it.

O Man, whoſoever thou art, think upon theſe things; but thou eſpecially, whoſoever findeſt thy ſelf guilty of any grievous ſin. Repent and amend, remember *Eternity*, and think upon the day of Death. It is uncertain in what place Death will expect thee; do thou therefore expect Death in every place. As the Lord ſhall find thee when he calls for thee, ſo ſhall he alſo paſs ſentence upon thee.

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whatso ever thou takeſt in hand remember the end and thou ſhalt never do amiſſe Eccluſ: 7. 36.

To think upon ETERNITIE, er not to amend ons manners, is to bid heaven farewell er to ioyn hands wth hell.

THE EIGHTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

How Christians ought not only to look upon the Emblems and Pictures of Eternity, *but come home and look within themselves, and seriously meditate upon the thing it self.*

ORder requires now, that leaving the *Psalmist*, and the rest, who have described unto us *Eternity* we should descend into our selves, keep at home, and stay within. He is a great way from home, from himself, and from his own salvation, whosoever hath an eye to that only which is transitory, and forgetteth that which is Eternal.

The Lawyers know well enough that a man will not let go his right and title, though it be but in a matter of three-half-pence, if it be a perpetuity, and to be yearly paid for ever. Yea, it is thought

a great Rent, if a Man be bound to pay, though but three farthings yearly, to his Land-lord, as long as the World endures. In such esteem are perpetuities, though in things little worth, though but three Pepper-corns. If thou art so solicitous and eager in pursuing thy right of three-half-pence, how comes it to pass, O Man, that thou art so negligent and careless in seeking after the Inheritance of an Eternal Kingdom, which may be had at a few years purchase? Thou fallest out with thy Brother for three-half-pence, thou goest to Law with him, thou makest it a long suit: In the mean time, thou sufferest others to carry away the Inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven. What is the reason? Is it so little worth? Is it not worth looking after? It seems thou thinkest so, or else thou wouldst labor for it more than thou dost. Thou art much cumbred about other things; thou thinkest all pains little enough; thou art never weary of seeking after them: But as for *Eternity*, that thou thinkest to be a great way off, and therefore thou art scarce ever at leisure so much as once to think upon it; or, if thou art any time at leisure, then thou hast no mind to it. O! It is a grievous thing, and very wearisome to be always looking after that which *yet* is not

here

here ever throughly to be looked into. Who would trouble his head, and weary his mind about it? We are all for the preſent. Give us preſent poſſeſſion; that is the thing we deſire, that is the thing we delight in: There is ſome content in that.

See our folly and want of diſcretion. What blindneſs is this, or rather is it not madneſs, to look for certainty where none is, and where it is never to look for it? In a buſineſs concerning our temporal and uncertain riches, we love to be certain, we will have good ſecurity, which yet, at the beſt, is very uncertain. But concerning Eternal and certain riches, we make our ſelves ſo certain, that we look for no aſſurance; we are ſo ſecure, that we look for no ſecurity, which yet, if we would, we might have as good as could be deſired. Does any man lend money without a Bill, or a Bond, or Pledge? Every man hath this preſently in his mouth, I love to be certain; I deſire good ſecurity; I will go ſafely to work; I will not put the matter to hazard. Things preſent and certain, when we hold the balance, always weigh down things future and uncertain. *Better*, ſay we, (as the Proverb goes) *is one Bird in the hand, than two in the buſh.* And, *I had rather ſee a Wren in a Cage, than*

than an Eagle in the Clouds. We are of *Plautus* his mind, we carry our eyes in our hands, and believe no more than we ſee. What fond and fooliſh Men are we, that ſeek for certainty of ſuch things as are moſt uncertain, which deceive us moſt when we make our ſelves moſt ſure of them, which make themſelves wings and flie away, whileſt we think we have them faſt enough in our hands! But, be it known unto all Chriſtian people, what aſſurance and ſecurity Chriſt, the King of Heaven will give: What aſſurance, I ſay, of Eternal Life, Chriſt will give unto all thoſe that will enter Bond for performance of Covenants. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.* Matth. 19. 17. *Si vis ad vitam ingredi, ſerva mandata.* The Condition of this Obligation is ſuch, That if thou keepeſt the Commandments, thou ſhalt enter into life, Life Eternal: But if thou breakeſt the Commandments, in as much as thou breakeſt them, then this Obligation ſhall be void, and of none effect. For whoſoever breaketh one of theſe Commandments, and deferreth his repentance, and doth not the ſame hour wherein he hath ſinned, ſeek reconciliation and peace with God, whom he hath offended; he is in danger to loſe himſelf, and all that he

he hath, and manifeſtly hazardeth the Eternal Salvation both of Soul and Body. There is but three fingers bredth, or rather but an inch between him and death. For he hath within himſelf the matter of a thouſand diſeaſes and cauſes of death: And yet raſh and fooliſh Man, he perſiſteth and continueth ſtill without fear or wit in the ſtate of damnation; in which ſtate, if it ſhould pleaſe God to take him away ſuddenly, he is in danger to periſh everlaſtingly. Is it not a bold and fooliſh part, for a Man to adventure all that he hath at a caſt, and hazard the loſs of Eternal Riches, when he may eaſily keep them?

If a Man ſhould ſuffer in Hell but ſo many torments, as he hath lived hours, or but ſo many torments as he hath committed ſins all his life; this might ſeem ſomewhat the more tolerable. If it were ſo, that in Hell there were any end of torments, after the expiration of any certain number of years, Men would make no end of ſinning, all the days of their life. The enemies of God would increaſe every day more and more. For albeit they know that the torments in Hell are ſo many in number, that they cannot be numbered; ſo long for continuance, that they cannot be meaſured; ſo grievous

for

for quality, that they cannot be endured, but with ſuch infinite pain, that every minute of an hour ſhall ſeem a whole year. Notwithſtanding all this, Men are nothing deterred from ſin, but walk on boldly, or rather run headlong to their own deſtruction.

If all the torments that can be inflicted or imagined, ſhould be heaped together upon the head of a Man for an hundred years together, they would not come near the puniſhments of Hell for one year, no, not for a day, nor yet an hour. All the puniſhments that Thieves, Robbers, Murderers, and ſuch Malefactors ſuffer, though grievous for the time, yet they are quickly ended; in three or four days they are over, or in the compaſs of a week at moſt; but the torments of the damned are not for a year, or an age, but for ever. God ſhall ever puniſh them, becauſe he can never puniſh them enough, though he puniſh them to all *Eternity*.

CHAP. I.

Eternity doth not only cut off all comfort and eaſe, but even all hope alſo.

IN this life we have *Hope* for our comforter in all calamities and diſtreſſes, which hath a ſovereign virtue to mitigate and aſſwage all pains and ſorrows. And God of his great mercy, for the moſt part, in all adverſities, ſtill leaveth a Man ſome *Hope* to help and ſuccor. The ſick man as long as he lives, he ſtill lives in *Hope:* As long as there is life, there is *Hope.* But after this life ended, there remaineth to the damned no more any *Hope* of comfort, *Hope*, the laſt comforter of all, taketh her flight, and Eternal Deſperation ſeiſeth upon them. The Prophet *Daniel* ſpeaketh of an Angel coming down from Heaven, and ſaying, *Hew the Tree down and deſtroy it*, cut off her boughs, ſhake off her leaves, and ſcatter her fruit abroad, *yet leave the ſtump of the Roots thereof in the Earth*, *Dan.* 4. 23. Upon which words ſaith St. *Ambroſe*, *The leaves and the fruit are ſhaken off, but the root is preſerved*; that is, Delights here are taken from us, and puniſhments are inflicted upon us, but yet *Hope* is not taken away from us. Be-

hold! The Root is preſerved, *Hope* is left behind. In Hell it hath no rooting. *Behold the day cometh*, (crieth the Prophet *Malachy*) *that ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, that it ſhall leave them neither root nor branch.* And *Job* lamenting cryeth out, *I am gone, and my Hope hath he removed like a Tree*, Job 19. 10. *The Hope*, or, *The expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh*, ſo ſaith *Solomon. Prov.* 10. 28. Therefore whileſt there is time and place for *Hope*, let us have *Hope*; but let us *Hope* for ſuch things as we ought. All humane things are vain and uncertain. The Heathen Poet tells us ſo much in theſe Verſes,

Omnia ſunt hominum tenui pendentia filo,
Et ſubito caſu quæ valuer eruunt.

All humane things hang by a ſlender thred,
What ſtands moſt ſtrong, is quickly ruined.

We muſt not therefore place our *Hope*, truſt, and confidence in ſuch things. Saint *Bernard* ſheweth us a better way in theſe words, *Faith* ſaith, *God hath prepared for the faithful, great and unconceivable good things.* And *Hope* ſaith, *He hath reſerved them, and laid them up for thee.* And *Charity* ſaith, in the third place, *I make haſte,*

and

and think it long till I come to them. True *Hope*, as St. *Gregory* affirmeth, raiſeth up the mind to the thought of *Eternity*, and taketh away the ſenſe of all outward croſſes and troubles. True *Hope* makes us to underſtand, that all worldly things are vain, but a *Modicum*, but for a *moment*. But, O that moment, on which all *Eternity* doth depend! The day of death, and the hour of the extream and laſt agony, is properly that moment, and that precious jewel; for buying whereof, the wiſe Merchant ſelleth all that he hath. But few know the worth of this jewel. About Eternal Salvation, ſaith St. *Jerome*, every man is negligent. But what is the reaſon that men are ſo negligent in a thing of ſuch great moment? Poor Men! We are troubled with weak and ill eyes. We ſee well enough near at hand, but we can ſcarce perceive any thing afar off. I do not ſpeak of ſuch as are come to mans eſtate, or ſuch as are grown old. Boys and Girls when they are new taken from their Cradle, before they have all their teeth come forth, learn the firſt elements of vices, they ſmutch their fingers preſently with the ſoil of covetouſneſs; and after a while, they have an unſatiable deſire after getting riches; they learn to make good markets for them-

ſelves; if they meet with a good penny-worth, they preſently lay hold upon it, their hand is preſently in the purſe, either laying out for gain, or receiving in gain; they know how to make the beſt uſe and advantage of their money; they get an inſight into the myſteries of divers trades; they will be talking of merchandiſe, they will learn good judgment of Wines; they will tell you what faſhion and cut is in uſe beyond ſea, *Juvenal* the Poet in his Satyrs, gave theſe a laſh long ago.

This old Wives teach Boys in their Infancy,
And Girls do learn before their A B C.
Hence is rice,
Of every vice.

Hence cometh our groſs ignorance, and forgetfulneſs of things Eternal. Young and old, all do overvalue their Money; but as for Heaven and *Eternity*, they know not, neither will they underſtand the true worth of them. But let us proceed.

CHAP

CHAP. II.

Eternity is a Sea, and a three-headed Hydra: *but it is alſo a Fountain of all Joy.*

I Would fain ask thee, O Chriſtian Man, whoſoever thou art that heareſt Sermons often, but ſeldom, it may be, with attention and devotion; thee eſpecially fain would I ask one queſtion. Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt take in hand to lade out all the Water in the Sea, into a ſmall River near adjoyning, which runneth back again into the Sea continually, as faſt as it is caſt out. Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt uſe no other Ladle but a very ſmall Spoon to caſt it out withal. Now tell me, How long doeſt thou think thou ſhouldſt be in draining of the Sea: Or again, Suppoſe thou ſhouldſt draw it out with a Bucket as big as an Hogſhead; and as faſt as thou draweſt, pour it out into another Channel. Anſwer me, In how many years doſt thou think thou ſhouldſt be able to draw the Sea dry? To ſit ſcorching and frying in the flames of Hell fire ſo many years, I know thou wilt ſay, were a grievous and wretched torment; and yet the damned would think it well with them, if it were ſo: They would like the condition well, and

not think the time long, ſo that they had any aſſurance, that at length their torments ſhould have an end, and not extend to all *Eternity*.

We read in Heatheniſh Authors of old time, a thing more ſtrange than true, of a cerrain *Hydra* or *Snake*, which (as they feigned) had three heads, and as ſoon as one was cut off, had two ſhoot up in the place thereof. But if this *Hydra* be any where to be found, it is in Hell; where there is a threefold *Eternity*, which like the *Hydra* ſtretcheth out her long neck with three heads, that is, *The pain of loſs, the pain of ſenſe, and the worm of Conſcience that never dieth*. What miſerable and improvident men are we, that having but a ſhort journey to go, but full of dangers all the way, go on notwithſtanding ſo merrily and ſportingly, as if we were walking all the while through *Paradiſe*, or a moſt pleaſant *Garden*, free from all fear of Enemies; and in the end of our walk, preſently to be received and admitted as Citizens into our Heavenly Countrey, a place of all ſecurity! For can we be ignorant? if we be, it is our own fault. But we cannot be ignorant, that at length we ſhall come to the two Gates of *Eternity*, the one of the bleſſed, the other of the damned: And enter we muſt at one of them,

that

that is certain; at which God knows, it is accordingly as we ſhall behave and carry our ſelves by the way.

Laurentius Juſtinianus, wondering at the merry madneſs of ſuch Travellers, breaks forth into this exclamation, *O the lamentable condition of mortal men, which go on exulting all the way, whileſt they are but exiles, or baniſhed men from their own Countrey!* Let us not ſettle our minds upon any vain joys, and fond toys by the way, whileſt we are travelling towards our Countrey; but let us ſo run our race, that at the end thereof, we may obtain admittance in at the Gate, which is the entrance to Eternal Bleſſedneſs. God hath indeed created us rather unto joys and pleaſures, than unto labors and ſorrows; but we are much miſtaken, both of the time and place: It is not here, it ſhall be hereafter. Joys are prepared in Heaven; but none but the good and faithful ſervants ſhall enter into them. And by what means may a man obtain entrance? Knoweſt thou not what Chriſt ſaid? *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence; and the violent take it by force, Matth.* 11. 12. Think now thus with thy ſelf, Am I this violent man? Is this the violence here ſpoken of, To eat, to drink, to riſe up to play, to lie down to take my eaſe? It is not certainly. Fight

we muſt, but it muſt be the good fight, like Chriſtian Champions; Run we muſt, but ſo, that we may obtain; Strive we muſt, but to enter in at the ſtrait Gate. Labor we muſt, and offer violence to the Kingdom of Heaven; but it muſt be in due time and place. Now whileſt we have time here, whileſt we are on the way, whileſt we have life and ſtrength, that when we come to the point of death, and ſo paſs the Horizon of this World, and depart into another, never to return back again; when we ſhall be tranſlated from *Time* to *Eternity*, then at the laſt we may have joy for our life paſt, and hope for that which is to come. Let us labor therefore, let us labor, I ſay, and offer violence to our ſelves, fighting againſt our own froward wills and affections: So ſhall we obtain by the mercy of God, everlaſting reſt for ſhort labor, and eternal glory for a few days travel.

True and ſolid joy is not here to be found in vain delights and pleaſures, but in Heaven, where there is joy and pleaſure for evermore. *God prepared a gourd, and made it come over* Jonah, *that it might be a ſhadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief*, *Jonah* 4. 6. So *Jonah* was exceeding glad of the gourd. And what is all the pleaſure, or rather vanity of this preſent World?

World? Is it not like *Jonahs* gourd flouriſhing for a time, and yeilding a comfortable ſhadow? Rich Men have their gourd alſo, that is, their riches, under the ſhadow whereof they rejoyce with exceeding great joy. Drunkards and Gluttons have their gourds alſo, that is, great Tables and delicious fare, under the ſhadow whereof they are merry and joyful. Voluptuous Men alſo have their gourds too, that is, their unlawful pleaſures, under the ſhadow whereof they lie down and ſport themſelves. But (alas!) ſorrow follows after ſuch joy, and ſuddenly overtakes it. Their mirth is ſoon turned into mourning; and their delights and pleaſures end in gall and bitterneſs. For what became of *Jonahs* gourd? *God prepared a worm when the morning roſe the next day, and it ſmote the gourd that it withered.* Now tell me, *Jonah*, where is thy gourd? What is become of it? Where is now thy exceeding great joy? They are both gone together, thy gourd is withered, and thy joy is ended. Such are our vain delights and pleaſures, ſuch is our joy, rather ſhadows of things than any thing indeed, they paſs away ſuddenly, and become like *Jonahs* gourd, that ſoon withered. The joy of this World is but for a moment, but the joy of the life to come is for all *Eternity.*

CHAP. III.

Here is declared by a most memorable example, How sweet and precious the taste of Eternity is.

THis knew *Theodorus* very well, one born of Christian Parents; and, as it seems, he learned it betimes, when for years he was but a youth, but an old man for judgment and discretion. For on a great festival day, kept throughout all *Egypt*, there being a great feast at his Fathers house, and many invited thereunto; when some were eating and drinking, others laughing and playing, and others sporting and dancing; he amidst all these jollities, retired himself to his inward Closet, finding himself wounded to the heart, but with a chaste arrow. For thus he began to expostulate with himself. Unhappy *Theodore*! What would it profit thee, if thou shouldst gain the whole World? Many things thou hast indeed, but canst thou tell how long thou shalt enjoy them? Thou livest in abundance now; thou maist feast it, and make merry; thou maist laugh and be fat, thou maist rejoyce and skip for joy. But art thou sure how long this shall last? I should like it well, if

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it would last always. But what shall I do? Shall I for the enjoying of these short and transitory pleasures & delights, deprive my self of those joys which are Eternal? Tell me, *Theodore*, is this according to Christian Religion, to frame unto our selves an Heaven here on Earth, and think to pass from delights to delights, from Temporal to Eternal: Either I am much deceived, or else Christ shewed unto as another way unto the Kingdom of Heaven, and that is through many tribulations. Therefore have no more to do with worldly vanities, but prefer Eternal joys before Temporal. Thus he said, and fell a weeping. So then he retired himself into a withdrawing room, and there prostrating himself upon the Earth, he prayed after this manner. *Eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee, I send up my sighs as humble Orators and Petitioners unto thee: I know not what to ask, nor how. Onely this one thing I beg at thy hands, that thou wilt not suffer me to die an Eternal Death. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee, and that I desire to be with thee, that I may sing Eternal praises unto thee. Lord have mercy upon me.* Whilest he was thus praying, in comes his Mother, on a sudden, and presently perceiveth by the redness and moistness of his eyes, that he had been a weeping; and thereupon she

saith,

saith, *My Son, What is the matter with thee? Why weepest thou? Why mournest thou? Why keepest thou out of sight to day? Why dost thou not come to the Table? The rest are all there: Thy company is desired: Come away.* But *Theodore* answered, and said, *I pray you, good Mother, have me excused; I find my self somewhat ill at stomach, I pray you do not urge me to eat or drink against my stomach.* So with a fair and colourable pretence he sent away his Mother. Then being alone, he conferred with God and himself about *Eternity*, and strictly examined all the course of his life saying unto himself, *What am I? or, What have I been? How hath it been with me heretofore? or, How shall it be with me hereafter, if I lose my part and fellowship in the Kingdom of Heaven and Blessed Eternity? There are divers ways to Heaven: Some go one way, some another; it is no matter which way we go, so we come thither. But because all ways are not alike, neither are all natures alike, every man ought to chuse that way which is most convenient. There is a short way, and a long; a safe way, and a dangerous. If then I be afraid to go a long and dangerous way, there is a shorter and a safer, which if I shall chuse, without all doubt, I shall have the Angels for my companions and comforters, and they will also rejoyce.*

Well,

Well, Theodore, *defer a while, but not too long, and do not yield too much. I hope I ſhall one day grow a ſtrong man, and then I ſhall be better able to deal with mine enemies, for I ſhall find thoſe that are ſtrong: But what if they be eaſie, flattering, fawning, and ſuch as will even weep for me? The truth is, I am moſt afraid of ſuch. But pluck up a good heart, man, and though by nature thou art flexible and eaſily moved, yet pray unto Chriſt, and he will make thee ſtrong and immovable. But what if thy Mother falls a weeping, beſeecheth thee with her tears trickling down her cheeks? What if ſhe hangs about thy neck, and deſires thee to ſpare thy ſelf? What if ſhe ſhews thee her breaſts which gave thee ſuck? Will not all theſe move thee? Here remember what St.* Jerome *ſaith, Notwithſtanding all theſe importunities, run with ſpeed unto the Standard of Chriſts Croſs. It is a virtue and praiſe-worthy to be cruel in ſuch a caſe as this. It is the portion and inheritance of thy Mother the Church, to ſtand under the Croſs of Chriſt: So did* Mary, *the Mother of Chriſt; and ſo muſt thou, if thou wilt have God thy Father in Heaven; and the Church, thy Mother, on Earth: And ſo thou wilt do, if thou beeſt a true ſon and no baſtard. But muſt I do it now in my youth, in the flower of mine age? that is hard: So it is, indeed, to fleſh and*

blood

blood. But experience teacheth it, that God is not well pleased with late service; for late services are seldom good. Therefore they do well, that begin to serve God betimes, that seek him early, and that remember him in the days of their youth, and learn to submit their tender necks unto the yoke of Christ. But I have been brought up tenderly, I have been fed with dainties; and shall I now enter upon a strict and rigid course of life, and bid adieu to all my pleasures? Shall I be able to endure it? I hope I shall. But, how long? For a year or two? That is not enough: I must go further, and continue to the end, even as long as I live. Therefore weigh and consider the matter well with thy self, before thou resolvest; and either never begin, or else continue to the end. I will by Gods assistance; for I hope he will not leave me alone to strive with these difficulties, which of my self I shall not be able to overcome. But it is a hard matter to strive against custome. I have hitherto lived like a Nobleman, and a Freeman; and shall I now live like a Poor-man, and a Slave? or, If I do how long shall I live so? If I put on the Poor-mans person, and act in the Theatre of this World, when shall I put it off? At the end of the last Act. And how far is it thither? As long as it is to the last breath. Thy part is not ended till thou art to depart out of this life.

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If thou once comeſt forth in the Poor-mans dreſs, there is no putting it off again: Thou muſt not once think of thy Silks, Sattens, and Velvets. Purple and Fine Linnen thou muſt not wear, until thou beeſt cloathed with the Robe of Immortality and Glory.

Theodore, *What thinkeſt thou? Shalt thou be able to hold out to the laſt Act? I will ſtrive what I can, and comfort my ſelf by the example of other good Actors that have gone before me. And whom ſhould I chuſe rather to follow and imitate than Chriſt, the Son of God, who voluntarily became poor, and made himſelf of no reputation humbling himſelf above meaſure, to do and ſuffer like a ſervant, being Lord of all? And ſhall not I do and ſuffer any thing after his example? Shall not I take up the Croſs and follow him? Am I better than he? Why ſhould I be afraid to follow, when I have ſuch a Leader? For who is it? Who bids me follow him? It is the voice of Man that I hear; but it is the Will of God, whom I ought to obey, becauſe he commands. But this is too high a point of Philoſophy, for a man to forſake his riches, and to embrace poverty. And what wilt thou do,* Theodore? *Reſolve with thy ſelf what to do.*

Why do I thus long doubt, and diſpute within my ſelf? Why do I waver thus between hope and fear? Have I not the example

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of my Lord before mine eyes? Did not he ſuffer many things not to be uttered? Was not he nailed to the Croſs, and deſpitefully uſed? He forſook his heavenly Treaſures, and came poor into this World. His birth, life, and death ſhew it. At his birth he wanted a Cradle; in his life he had not where to hide his Head; and at his death he had not wherewithal to cover his Body. Naked came he into this World, and naked he went out. How was it with him in his life? He was fain to flee from one place to another. He was often wearied with travel, ſcorched with heat, and dry for thirſt. He was as indefatigable in doing, as he was patient in ſuffering, and both in an high degree. Was ever any one ſo well bent to poverty, ſo patient in labors, and ſo gentle and milde when he was reproached? And ſhould I be aſhamed of ſuch a Leader? Should I bluſh to be called one of his followers? Shall not I be content to be ſuch as my Lord and Saviour will have me to be? I am ready, for love of him, to ſuffer hunger, thirſt, cold, nakedneſs, poverty, and ſuch like. I am willing, for his ſake, to be bound, burnt, and cut in pieces. Theſe ſufferings are but ſhort, they cannot continue long. But the joys or torments of Eternity are long indeed; for they ſhall never have end. Therefore farewell all the World, and the things that are in it, I care not for you, I regard you not;

Farewel,

Farewel, I ſay; but welcome, Eternity, whenſoever thou comeſt: Thou art the only thing that I ſeek after; my Soul longeth after thee; there is nothing that I deſire in compariſon of thee.

With the heat of ſuch Cogitations his Soul was ſo ſet on fire, that it was inflamed with the love of *Eternity*, which the Bleſſed ſhall enjoy in Heaven. Therefore he reſolved to take leave of his Parents, to forſake his riches, and bid adieu to his delights for ever. He did not reſolve haſtily, but continued in his reſolution conſtantly. He was not ſoon hot, and ſoon cold; he was not altered all on the ſudden; he did not paſs from one extream to another; he did not ſtrive for the higheſt pitch at the firſt, but roſe up by degrees, and became one of *Pachonius* his Scholars. You have heard the Prologue; but there follows no Tragedy after it: For, contrary to the Law of a Tragedy, we have a ſorrowful beginning, but a joyful ending. He came forth with a *Lacrymæ*, but went off with a *Plaudite:* At his *Intrat*, there was weeping for grief; but at his *Exit*, there was clapping of hands for joy. Thus have ye heard the life and death of *Theodorus*, whoſe Soul fed, as it were, upon thoughts of *Eternity*, and was delighted therewith as with marrow and fatneſs. He was not

of

of the Worlds mind, which counteth *Eternity* but a Fable; but refuſed not himſelf to become a fable and a by-word in the World, being perſwaded fully of a *Bleſſed Eternity*, and earneſtly deſiring and thirſting to have a part in it.

Chriſtian Brethren, ſhall I ſpeak a free word, but a true? or, not I, but *Theodorus*. Moſt men live ſo, as if there were no ſuch thing as *Eternity*, as if it were but a meer fable and feigned thing. But what do I tell you of *Theodorus*? Will you hear what St. *Peter* ſaith? *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo and the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of men ought we to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs?* 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. But where are thoſe men now a-days, by whoſe holy converſation and godlineſs a man may judge that they believe St. *Peter*, that the day of the Lord is coming, and that *Eternity* ſhall follow after? But if you will not believe St. *Peter*, hear what Truth it ſelf ſaith. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat*, *Mat.* 7 13. Certainly men would not go in at the broad

broad gate of destruction, if they did think they should come out no more, if they did once dream of *Eternity*. But, as I said before, most men make *Eternity* but a feigned thing, a witty invention to keep men in aw, and a good honest fable. And yet how many are apt to say, We believe that there is a *Blessed Eternity* after this life, we hope to have part in it, we have a desire and longing after it! But (alas!) how little is their faith! how vain is their hope! how cold is their desire! Present pleasures, money in the hand, the allurements of the flesh steal away the hearts of many, and by little and little, make the desire and love of *Eternity* grow quite cold in them, as if they had drowned and buried it in the grave of oblivion. We hear it often read and preached. *Thus saith the Lord, This is the Commandment of the Lord:* And as often as we hear it, we still neglect it. Say the Lord what he will, command what he will, our old way pleaseth us best, *We will walk after our own devices and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Ask ye now amongst the Heathen, who hath heard such horrible things? Jer.* 18. 12, 13. Had the people which knew no God, but known these secrets of *Eternity*, certainly they never would have contemned and neglected them. *Go to now, O ye sons of men,*

men, because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded, I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you, Prov. 1. 24, 26, 27. When *Eternity* shall suddenly overtake you. If Death seise upon you in this miserable state and condition, there is then no hope of mercy: The Gate is presently shut, there is no opening of it: The sentence of condemnation is past, there is no repealing of it. *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Matth.* 25. 41.

Watch therefore good Christians, watch, I say. The Judge stands at the Gate. That may happen in a minute, that you may be sorry for, for all *Eternity*. *Anthony* the Great, in a certain Sermon which he made to the people, spake thus unto them. *Dearly beloved Brethren, in matters of this life we have a care to make good bargains, we will be sure to have a pennyworth for a penny.* I lay out, for instance, so much money, and I have the worth of it in wares; I give so many crowns, and I have so many bushels of Wheat; so many pounds, and I have so many quarters of Malt. But we are not so wise in Heavenly matters; we will not give

give things Temporal, in exchange for things Eternal. Eternal life is a thing not worth looking after, we much undervalue it, we will ſcarce give any thing for it, we will not take any pains or labor to obtain it. And yet what is our labor, ſuppoſe the greateſt we can undergo? If it be compared unto Life Eternal the reward of it, it will not amount to ſo much as one half-penny, in reſpect and reference to a Million of Gold. For what ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *The days of our life are threeſcore years and ten; and if by reaſon of ſtrength they be fourſcore years, yet is their ſtrength, labour and ſorrow*, *Pſal.* 90. 10. But ſuppoſe a Man ſhould live an hundred years, to ſpeak with the moſt, and all that while ſerve God zealouſly and faithfully, were it not time well ſpent to gain *Eternity?* were not the labor well beſtowed to purchaſe a Kingdom? I do not mean a Kingdom to continue for an hundred years only, but throughout all ages; not an Earthly Kingdom, but the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, Chriſtian Brethren, be not puffed up with vain glory, be not ambitious after worldly honour, be not wearied out with well-doing, be not caſt down with afflictions, do not ſink under the burden of the Croſs, but bear it patiently and chearfully, *Rejoycing*, with the Apoſtles, *that ye*

are

are counted worthy to ſuffer. Rom. 5. 3. *For I reckon,* ſaith St. *Paul, that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us,* *Rom.* 8. 18. Let no Man when he hath forſaken the World, think that he hath forſaken any great matter. For what is Earth in compariſon of Heaven? It is but a Centre to the Circle, a Minute to *Eternity*, a Drop to the Sea, and a Grain of Duſt to the Dry Land. What are our riches? Fading and uncertain moveables. We are ſoon taken from them, or they from us. Though with much ado we keep them as long as we live, yet whether we will or no, we muſt part with them when we die; we cannot carry them to our Graves. Why do we not then make a vertue of neceſſity? Why do we not willingly part with them, whileſt they are ours, ſeeing that ſhortly we muſt part with them, whether we will or not, when Death attacheth us for a debt due to Nature, and then they can be no longer ours? Why do we not lay them out like good Merchants for the *Margarite* or precious Pearl of Eternal life? Thus ſweetly goes on *Athanaſius*: But I muſt leave him, and draw to a concluſion.

Pachonius was wont, whenſoever he felt any unlawful thoughts or deſires ariſe in his mind, to drive them away with the remembrance

membrance of *Eternity*; and if at any time he perceived them to rebel again, he ſtill repel'd them by meditating ſeriouſly upon *Eternity*, the Eternal puniſhments of the damned, the torments without end, the fire that never goes out, and the worm that never dieth. And here I will conclude this Conſideration with the Exhortation of the ſame *Pachonius*. *Before all things*, ſaith he, *let us every day think upon the laſt day; let us in time remember Eternity; let us every minute we have to live, ſo live, as if we lived in fear of Everlaſting Torments; that ſo by the Mercy of God in Jeſus Chriſt, we may for ever eſcape them.*

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Good Master what good thing shall I doe that I may have ETERNALL life. *Math: 19. 10.*

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of god the love of riches & of ETERNITIE. *are scarce resident in one heart.*

THE NINTH CONSIDERATION Upon *ETERNITY.*

The first Concluſion.

NO Man living is able in word to expreſs, or in thought to conceive the infinite ſpace of *Eternity.* Between a true Man, and a painted Man, true fire and painted fire, there is a great deal of difference; and yet theſe are in ſome kind one like unto another. But between our common fire and the fire of Hell, between the ſorrows of this life, and the pains of Hell, there is no compariſon, no proportion at all. For this life, and the ſorrows of this life, are meaſured by ſpace of Time; but the life to come, and the ſorrows thereof cannot be meaſured by any thing but only *Eternity*, which alſo is without meaſure. This doth our Saviour moſt elegantly expreſs in the Goſpel of S. *John*, by the Parable of the

Vinebranch, *if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned*, *John* 15. 6. In these words is *Eternity* briefly and plainly described: For mark the words well; they run not in the *future*, *He shall be cast forth, and shall wither, and men shall gather them, and shall cast them into the fire, and they shall be burned*; I say they run not in the *future*, but all in the *present* tense, *He is cast forth and withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. They are burned.* This is the state and condition of the damned, *They are burned*, that is, *always burning*. When a thousand years are past and gone, as it was in the beginning, so it is still, *They are burned*: And when a thousand and a thousand more yet are gone, as it was, so it is, *They are burned*. And if after certain millions of years the question be asked, What is now the state and condition of the damned? What do they? What suffer they? How fares it with them? There can be no other answer made but this, *They are burned*, still burning, *continually*, *inutterably*, *Eternally*, from one age to another, even for ever and ever. Upon this place excellently saith St. *Augustine*, One of these two must needs be the condition of the Vine-

Vinebranch, either it muſt abide in the Vine, or elſe be caſt into the fire; if not in the Vine, then certainly in the fire. But that it may not be caſt into the fire, let it ſtill abide in the Vine.

The ſecond Concluſion.

IF thoſe men which do ſtill continue in their ſins, did but know how near they are unto *Eternity*, and everlaſting torments; if they did conſider well with themſelves, how that *God* in a moment, in a breath, in the *twinkling* of an eye (as we ſpeak) may ſuddenly take them away in their ſins, and deliver them up unto death; then ſurely, if they had it, they would give all *Spain*, all the treaſures of *Aſia*, all the gold of *India*, yea all the world to obtain but one hour to confeſs their ſins, to repent them of the ſame, and to ask God pardon and forgiveneſs: They would not, certainly they would not, ſtill hug and embrace their ſins, they would not every day multiply them as they do, they would not lodge them every night in their boſom, and ly ſnorting in them, *Matth.* 16. 27. *For what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* Though thou loſeſt every thing elſe in the world, yet, O man, have a care to keep

thy ſoul. It were needleſs here to reckon up a *Catalogue* of the Martyrs of Chriſt in all ages. There are whole books of them in great volumes: they are recorded to all poſterity, and their names ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance. But the greateſt honor that we can do them is to follow their good example, to learn of them Chriſtian fortitude and magnanimity, to fear God more than man, *Matth.* 10. 28. *God which is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in Hell, rather than man which can only kill the body, but is not able to kill the ſoul*; to love God more than all the world; to be willing to part with all for Chriſt, to loſe all to ſave our ſouls, and gain *Eternity*. I will conclude here with that excellent exhortation of St. *Auguſtine*; What then ſhall we do, brethren? What? What elſe but whileſt we have time amend our lives, where we have done amiſs, do ſo no more; become new men: That what is threatned and ſhall certainly come upon wicked and ungodly men, may not fall upon us; not becauſe we ſhall not be, but becauſe we ſhall not be like unto them: Whatſoever is written in the Scripture, is written for our learning, it is the voice of God. Obſerve and make good uſe of what you read: Whatſoever we ſuffer in this life is but the gentle rod of our moſt mer-

merciful Father, who correcteth us here, as his dear children, that we be not tormented with the damned hereafter. Why then do the light afflictions of this life seem so grievous unto us? Why do we even tremble, and quake for fear, when we do but hear of them? The most grievous sufferings of this life, if we judge aright of them, in comparison of everlasting fire, are very small, yea indeed none at all.

The third Conclusion.

AMongst Christians, God knoweth, there are a great many, that either believe there is neither Heaven nor Hell, or else if they did truly believe it, they would certainly live otherwise than they do. As concerning such men, the question may be very fitly asked, *Luke* 18, 8. *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?* Some there are that would fain be thought to be true Believers; They confess it indeed with their mouths, but dissemble with their double hearts; If their words may be believed, they may go for true Believers; but if their lives be examined, they may be thought to be no better than Infidels. They never think upon *Eternity*, or very seldom; and when they do, they do but think upon it and there

is all; it is gone in a thought they never weigh well with themſelves what it is, they never ſeriouſly meditate upon it, they never rouſe their underſtanding to be intent upon it, they never bend their wills and affections to ſeek after it, they never imprint it in their deep cogitations that ſo they may remember it. They ſcarce begin to think upon it, but their minds are preſently ſomewhere elſe, their thoughts go a wandring, their imagination is working upon ſomewhat elſe. And if at any time ſome ſparks of devotion and godly deſires ariſe in their hearts, they are preſently quenched and choaked with cares of this world, with multitude of buſineſs, with *profits* or *pleaſures*, and ſuch like. And thus miſerable men they ſtop their ears, and cloſe their eyes, and without fear or underſtanding they run hoodwinkt in the way that leadeth to *Eternal* death. It is obſerved by the holy Fathers of the Glutton in the Goſpel, that he never lifted up his eyes till he was in torments; All his life long they were ſhut againſt the poor and againſt all godlineſs: He opened them not till he was in Hell, when it was too late. And it is no marvel that ſo many men run blindfold to the houſe of ſlaughter, and *Eternal* ſorrow: For the way is very broad and pleaſant, ſmooth

and

and plain, a man can hardly go out of it, there is no fear of loſing himſelf till he comes to the end thereof. Then he ſhall perceive that all the while he was travelling, he was quite out of the right way: then I ſay, when there is no returning back again. Many would like this way well, if there were no end thereof: For, though it rids merrily, it ends miſerably: and therefore they do wiſely, that leave the great road, and travel on in the rough way; that chooſe rather to go through briers and thorns unto an *Eternal Paradiſe*, than through a pleaſant *Paradiſe* to an *Eternal Priſon*; that reſolve with themſelves to break through all difficulties; counting it better to go on weeping and mourning in the narrow way of ſalvation, rather than laughing and rejoycing in the broad way of deſtruction Moſt true it is which *Job* ſpeaketh, *As the cloud is conſumed, and vaniſhed away; ſo he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more: He ſhall return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know him any more*, Job 7. 9.

The fourth Concluſion.

WHoſoever uſeth to deſcend into a deep and ſerious conſideration of

Eternity, he will be so far from living licentiously and wantonly, that you shall hardly ever see him laughing heartily. It hath been observed of as many as have been raised from the dead, and turned again unto life, that they were scarce ever seen to laugh at all. In particular it hath been observed of *Lazarus* of *Bethany*, whom Christ loved. He and they, as many as have been raised from the dead, might truly say with the *Preacher*, *I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doth it: Eccles.* 2. 2. Not without cause in this doth *Cyril* of *Alexandria* confess himself to be fearful; For he saith thus, I am afraid of Hell and the punishments thereof, because they have no end; I am afraid of the devouring worm, because it never dieth. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! Deut.* 32. 19. Whosoever is not bettered by the consideration of *Eternity*, (I dare boldly say, and think I may say it truly) either he hath no faith at all; or if he hath any faith, he hath no heart at all; or at the best it is but an heart that is dead and without all sense. It was the witty saying of a learned man, That marriage was a short and a sweet song, but that it had a doleful close: So we may most truly say of all the pleasures that we take

take in ſin, that it is a ſhort and a merry ſong, but it ends in mourning and lamentation; or rather it is a ſong *ſhort* for *time*, and *ſweet* for *tune* as long as it laſteth; for it runs much upon *quavers*, and *ſemiquavers* of *mirth* and *jubilation*. But the *time* ſuddenly changeth, and the *tune* is altered; for there follows without any *reſt* the *larges* and *longs* of *ſorrow* and *lamentation*; which cannot be meaſured by any *time*. For the torments of Hell are *Eternal*. *Oh Eternity, Eternity, Eternity!*

The fifth Concluſion.

WHenſoever we ſpeak of *Eternity*, we ſpeak always with the leaſt, but we can never ſpeak too much of it. Whatſoever is ſaid comes ſhort of it. No words can utter it, no figures can number it, no time can meaſure it. For *Eternity* is of this nature; take from it what you will, it is ſtill the ſame. It is neither increaſed by addition, nor diminiſhed by ſubſtraction. Suppoſe there were ſubſtracted from it ſo many years as there are ſtars in the firmament, drops in the ſea, ſands on the ſhore, leaves on the trees, graſs in the fields, motes in the Sun, duſt on the earth: What remains? As much as there was before the *Subſtraction*. Suppoſe there were ſo many

years added to it: What then is the *Result*? The same that it was before the *Addition*. The *total sum* is neither more nor less, than what it was, that is, *Eternity*.

As long as God is, so long shall the damned be tormented. This we have shadowed out before by some similitudes and resemblances, unto which we will add one more out of *Bonaventure*. If one of the damned, saith he, should weep after this manner, that he should let fall but one tear in an hundred years, and those tears should be kept together so many hundred years till they would equal the drops of the sea: Alas! Alas! (Not to speak of the sea) How many millions of years must needs pass before they can make one little river! or if they should at length make a whole sea of water: yet even then it might truly be said, *Now Eternity beginneth*. And if he should weep again after the same manner till he made another sea; yet then also it might be said again as truly as before. *Now Eternity beginneth*: and so on forwards for ever. Let no man once doubt of the truth hereof; for between that which is finite and that which is infinite there is no proportion. But this seems wonderful and strange unto us, because our imagination cannot conceive it: It cannot reach unto that which is so far remote;

mote; It cannot penetrate into that which is infinite, for that is impenetrable. And this is the reaſon that our underſtanding is ſo hardly drawn to the conſideration of *Eternity*; becauſe it bluſheth in a ſort, and is aſhamed, or elſe for indignation cannot endure to tire it ſelf in the ſearch of that which cannot be found out. But let us put away this fooliſh and ſhameful modeſty, and let us force our underſtanding to the due and ſerious contemplation of *Eternity*, and let it be our daily exerciſe to be ſtill meditating upon ſuch ſimilitudes as may in ſome ſort ſhadow it out, and repreſent it unto us: And ſo ſhall we never do amiſs. Say what we can, think what we will, imagine ſo many millions of millions of years as it is poſſible for the mind of man to conceive, we ſhall ſtill come ſhort of the meaſure and length of *Eternity*: The years of *Eternity* are more, far more, yea infinitely more. This is certain, and without all controverſie.

The Prophet *Daniel* ſignifieth the incomprehenſible dimenſion and length of *Eternity* in theſe words, *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteouſneſs as the ſtars for ever and ever*, *Dan.* 12. 3. Mark theſe words, *For ever and ever.* As if he ſhould have ſaid, No words are ſufficient

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to expreſs the nature of *Eternity*. It is, *for ever and ever* : Here is all that I can ſay of it : Though more might be ſaid in reſpect of its own nature, yet I am not able to ſay more. Obſerve his *Auxeſis*, or his *augmentation* of it by *multiplication* : *For ever*, that is, for *Eternity* : But he thinketh that not ſufficient, and therefore he doubles it, *and ever*. And yet in the Latin it is expreſſed more fully, in theſe words, *In perpetuas Æternitates*, *To perpetual Eternities*, Mark here, he ſaith not, *In Æternitatem*, *To Eternity* barely in the *Singular number* ; but *In Æternitates*, *To Eternities* in the *Plural*, as if one were not enough : Neither doth he reſt here indefinitely, ſaying *To Eternities*, nor yet doth he add any finite term, becauſe none can expreſs it, but an infinite, *Perpetuas*, *Perpetual* ; *In perpetuas Æternitates*, *To perpetual* or *Infinite Eternities*. Now if one *Eternity* is without end, what are two? what are ten ? what are an hundred ? what are infinite ? If we ſhould multiply the great year or years a thouſand times, it would not amount to the leaſt fraction of the numberleſs number of *Eternity*. They ſay that the Eighth Cœleſtial *Orb* or *Sphere* is moved wonderful leiſurely beyond all compariſon: For though it be daily wheeled about by the rapid motion of the *Primum mobile*,

mobile. yet it finiſheth not its own proper circuit but once in thirty ſix thouſand years, and this ſpace of time they call, *The great year, or Plato's year.* But compare this with *Eternity*, and it will appear to be but a moment, but an inſtant, but a minute, indeed nothing at all. It is a true ſaying of *Boetius*, that an inſtant or point of time, and ten thouſand years, compared together, keep better proportion, than ten thouſand years and *Eternity.* But hear what St. *John* ſaith, *Little children, it is the laſt time, or the laſt hour,* 1 *John* 2. 18. And this he ſaid one thouſand ſix hundred years ago. It is moſt true therefore what St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, Whatſoever hath an end, that thing is but ſhort. *Eternity* is a *Word* conſiſting but of four ſyllables, but it is a *thing* without end. Therefore ſet thy love upon *Eternity.* Let Chriſt be thy end, and thou ſhalt reign with Chriſt without end.

The ſixth Concluſion.

IT is not to be believed that any man that hath but the leaſt ſmack of true Religion can be ſo far carried away by his impotent and unruly paſſions (if he be not as bad as a beaſt.) ruled meerly by ſenſe, and ſerving only his ſenſual appetite; For

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the wicked and ungodly man, even then when he is almoſt ſwallowed up in the deep pit, whereinto his ſins have plunged him headlong, even then, I ſay, doth but laugh at it, regards it not, is not a jot troubled at it: It is not to be believed, I ſay, that any man that hath any Religion at all in him, can be ſo far carried away by his headſtrong and unbridled paſſions, but if he will ſpend a part of an hour every day in meditating upon *Eternity*, yea if he will but once in a week ſeriouſly think upon it, he will mend his manners, he will change the courſe of his life to better, he will certainly become a new man: Of a proud man, he will become humble and lowly; of an angry man, he will become mild and gentle? Of an unclean man, he will become chaſte and continent; of a drunken man, he will become ſober and temperate. He will put on, not the outward, but the inward habit of a true religious and godly man. He will become ſuch a one, not in clothes and outward expreſſion, but in heart, and inward affection. Neither will he raſhly and unadviſedly, ſlightly and negligently, upon a ſpurt all at once on the ſudden paſs from one extream to another: (ſuch alterations are not good, neither will they continue long.) But he will again and again weigh the matter

ter well with himſelf, he will conſider well upon it, he will faſten his ſerious thoughts upon it, he will often revolve in mind *Eternity*, *Eternity*, *Eternity*, that ſhall never have end, end never, never end; which ſhall laſt throughout innumerable, incomprehenſible, infinite ages. This will he do with conſideration and attention, and often ruminate upon it, as beaſts chew the cud. Meat though never ſo good and wholſome, if it be not chewed in the teeth, prepared in the mouth, digeſted in the ſtomach, turned into blood, and diſtributed by the veins into all the parts of the body, turns to poyſon rather than to nouriſhment, begets all manner of diſeaſes, is retained perhaps ſometime in the body, but doth more harm than good, were a great deal better out than in. Even ſo the thoughts of Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell are good and wholſome, godly and holy, but none more than the thought of *Eternity*, which may worthily be called the *Quinteſſence*. But as it is with meat, not the taking of it meerly into the mouth, but the good digeſting of it in the ſtomach, the turning of it into good blood in the liver, and the diſtributing of it into all the parts by the veins, nouriſheth the body: So it is with thoſe precious thoughts of *Death*, *Judgment*, *Heaven*, *Hell*, and *Eternity*: not the bare

bare thinkingupon them,but ſeriou: thinking upon them with our ſelves, ſetting apart all cares and worldly diſtractions,the ponderings of them well in our hearts, and the often ruminating upon them, this is it that feedeth and nouriſheth the ſoul. If this be not done, the reſt is to little purpoſe: without this even the reading of the holy Scriptures is fruitleſs, the hearing of the word preached is unprofitable. Many hear Sermons often, read the Scripture over and over again, and yet are little bettered by it, becauſe they do not meditate upon what they have both read and heard. When they hear, what comes in at one ear goes out at the other: when they read, the eye is no ſooner off from the book, but what was read is ſoon ſlipt out of memory. Before theycan practice what theyhave heard or read, they have quite forgotten what they ſhould do. Therefore if we will read or hear with profit, we muſt ſpend ſome time in meditating and pondering with our ſelves what we have read and heard. This leſſon we may learn of the bleſſed Virgin the mother of our Lord, Luk. 2.19. *But Mary kept all theſe things, and pondered them in her heart.*

The ſeventh Concluſion.

FEW or none believe, or elſe do not well underſtand and weigh with themſelves theſe words of Chriſt, *Matth.* 7. 13. *Enter ye in at the ſtraight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat:* 14. *Becauſe ſtrait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* This again our Saviour repeats by the mouth of St *Luke*, Luk 13. 21. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; For many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* *Auguſt.* Whoſoever laughs at this faith, and therefore will not believe becauſe he doth not ſee; when that ſhall come to paſs which he did not believe, he ſhall bluſh and be confounded, he ſhall be confounded and ſeparated from the bleſſed; he ſhall be ſeparated from the bleſſed, and have his portion with the damned.

Hieronimus Plautus reports of a certain woman, that hearing *Bertoldus* a powerful man in the Pulpit inveigh very vehemently and bitterly againſt a ſin that ſhe knew her ſelf guilty of, fell down dead in the Church; and after a while by the bleſſing of God upon the prayers of the Congregation coming

coming again unto her self, related unto them what she had seen in this trance, saying thus, Methought I stood before Gods Tribunal, and threescore thousand souls more with me, called together from all the parts of the world, to receive their final sentence: And they were all condemned and adjudged to *Eternal* torments, but only three. Oh! what a fearful thing was this! I should hardly believe this womans relation, but that I believe Christs asseveration in the Gospel, *Matth.* 7. 13. *Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat*; And again, v. 14. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* It may seem strange to flesh and blood that God the Father of Mercies should pass the sentence of condemnation upon so many, I do not say threescore thousand, but threescore thousand thousand? And what man would believe it, were he not perswaded of the truth thereof, upon the consideration of the sovereign and infinite Majesty of God which is offended; the unutterable malice of sin which is committed, and many evident testimonies of Scripture by which it is plainly proved; *Job* trembles at it, saying, *Job* 10. 22. *A land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without*

without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs, or according to the Latin, *where there is no order, and where everlaſting horror dwelleth.* St. *Matthew* affirms as much in the words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire.* Let us conſider theſe things well with our ſelves, and whileſt we have time let us waſh away our ſins with the tears of repentance, for fear leſt God ſuddenly ſnatch us away, and give us our portion to drink with hypocrites in the bottomleſs pit of Hell, where there is nothing but weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, where the worm never dieth; and the fire never goes out, from whence there is no redemption, no redemption. I ſay, and again I ſay, no redemption; No, not any comfort at all, not ſo much as a little drop of cold water. If the godly themſelves who are in the ſtate of grace and in the favour of God, whoſe minds and wills be good, if they I ſay could ſufficiently conceive from what grievous torments they ſhall be delivered at the day of judgment, and into what unutterable and unconceivable joys they ſhall enter, without doubt they would uſe no delay, they would not let an hour paſs, but out of hand they would take their leave of all Vanities, forſake the world, and leave the dead to look after the dead: But as for them

themselves, they would be daily and hourly well imployed about their Masters business, always studying to please God, ever lauding and praising him for his goodness and mercy towards them, in blessing them in part here in this world, and giving them an assured promise of everlasting blessedness in the world to come, for delivering them from the torments of Hell, and giving them entrance into the joys of Heaven. It is the saying of St. *Gregory*, The evils of this present life seem the more hard unto us, the less we think upon the good which shall follow hereafter, And because we consider not the exceeding great rewards which are laid up for us, therefore we count the afflictions of this world grievous to be born: whereas if we did lift up our minds, and raise our thoughts to the contemplation of those things which are *Eternal*, and not subject to any change; if we would have an eye unto them, and set our hearts upon *them*, we would certainly count the sufferings of this life, and whatsoever hath an end, to be as nothing; and again, *joy in tribulation* is a song in the night: For although we are outwardly afflicted with the sense of sorrows *Temporal*, yet we are inwardly comforted with the hope of joys *Eternal*.

Much after the same manner reasoneth St.

St. *Auguſtine*: If thou wouldeſt but attend, ſaith he, unto what thou ſhalt hereafter receive, thou wouldeſt count all the ſuffering of this preſent life to be but light, and altogether unworthy of the glory which ſhall be revealed. For brethren, (to ſpeak of the worth of things) for *Eternal reſt* a man ſhould be content to undergo *Eternal labor*, and for *Eternal joy* willingly ſuffer *Eternal ſorrow*: But if the labor and ſorrow were *Eternal*, when ſhould a man come to reſt and joy *Eternal?* Therefore upon neceſſity thy *tribulation* muſt be but *Temporal*, that ſo at length thou maiſt receive a reward which ſhall be *Eternal*. For hang up the ſcales, and put *Eternity* in one, and a thouſand years in the other: what do I ſay, a thouſand years, yea ten thouſand, yea an hundred thouſand, and yet more, a thouſand thouſand, they are all too light to weigh with *Eternity*; there is no compariſon betwixt them. And yet further, to make them more light; As they are but *Temporal*, ſo likewiſe they are but ſhort, and of no continuance, they laſt but for a few winter-days, when they are at the ſhorteſt, or rather but for one day, and that a ſhort one; the day of this life which is ſoon paſt, and they are gone. Though a man therefore ſhould ſuffer all his life long even to the laſt breath, though he ſhould

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ſuffer, I ſay, labors, griefs, ſorrows, impriſonment, ſcourge, hunger, thirſt, all his life long, even to the laſt breath, yet his ſufferings are but ſhort, becauſe his life is but ſhort. For *the days of our pilgrimage are* but *few*, though *evil*, as *Jacob* told *Pharaoh*, *Gen.* 47. 9. And *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman is of few days*; though as *Job* complaineth, *full of trouble.* And *Pſal.* 39. 5. *Behold*, ſaith *David*, *thou haſt made my days as an hand breadth*, (and that is but a ſhort meaſure, and yet he goeth further) *and mine age is as nothing before thee.* And as our *Life* is *ſhort*, ſo is our *Affliction light*, but it *worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of glory*, 2 *Cor* 4. When this *ſhort life* and *light labor* is ended, we ſhall inherit *everlaſting life*, an *Eternal Kingdom*, and felicity without end: We ſhall be made equal to the Angels, *heirs of God*, *and joint-heirs with Chriſt*, *Rom.* 8. 17. Oh! For how little labor, how great a reward! and again, St. *Auguſtine* in another place, *The thoughts of God are very deep.* Where is the thought of God; and what is his purpoſe; He letteth the rains looſe for the preſent, but afterwards he will draw them in. Do not rejoyce and ſport thy ſelf, like the fiſh in the water, which having got the bait in her mouth, playeth up and down, but being

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ſtruck with the hook in the jaws, may be pulled up at the fiſhers pleaſure. The time which ſeems long unto thee is indeed but ſhort, very ſhort. For what is the life of man compared with *Eternity*? Wouldeſt thou be patient and long ſuffering? Conſider Gods *Eternity*: Doſt thou only conſider thine own days, which are but few and ſhort, and doſt thou think that in them all things ſhall be fulfilled? That the wicked ſhould be condemned, and the godly crowned? Wouldeſt thou have all theſe things fulfilled in thy few and ſhort days? God ſhall fulfil them in his own time. God is *Eternal*. God is patient and long-ſuffering: And thou ſayeſt, But I cannot be patient and long-ſuffering, becauſe I am not *Eternal*. But thou mayeſt be if thou wilt: For do but joyn thy heart to Gods *Eternity*, and thou ſhalt be *Eternal* with him. If thou beeſt a good Chriſtian, and well inſtructed in the fear of the Lord, thou wilt certainly conclude, God hath reſerved all unto his own judgment. The good and godly men are troubled and afflicted: For God chaſtiſeth them as his own Children. But the wicked and ungodly men come into no ſuch trouble and affliction: For God caſteth them off, and condemneth them as aliens. A certain man hath two ſons; He chaſtiſeth the one, and letteth

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the other go without any chaſtiſement: The one, if he goes never ſo little awry is preſently buffeted, whipped and ſcourged; the other, let him do never ſo ill, he never hears of it, he is not ſo much as once rebuked for it. What is the reaſon: He that is puniſhed, is the fathers heir; and he that goes unpuniſhed is diſinherited. For what ſhould the Father do? He ſees there is no hope of him, and that he is paſt grace, and therefore he lets him alone to do what he liſteth. But yet notwithſtanding, the ſon which is ever and anon puniſhed for the leaſt offence, will be ready to bemoan and deplore his own caſe, and count his brother happy which goeth unpuniſhed. He will, I ſay, unleſs God hath given him a wiſe and underſtanding heart, to know what maketh for his own good. He will be apt to ſay in his heart, My brother followeth all ill courſes, taketh his pleaſure, waſteth his means, doth what ſeemeth good in his own eyes, is ever breaking my fathers commandment, and hath never an ill word for it. But the caſe is otherwiſe with me: If I be but out of ſight never ſo little while, if I go but to the next door, if I do but ſtep aſide, ſtir but a foot, but an inch beyond my bounds, preſently I am called in queſtion, Sirrah, where have you been; there is no hope of pardon, I am

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ſure to ſmart for it. This is my caſe. And I ſay, Thou art in a far better caſe than thy brother; and if thou beeſt not a fool, thou wilt think ſo too: For in that thou art corrected, it is a ſign that thou art beſt beloved. If thou thinkeſt only upon thy preſent ſtate, it cannot but ſeem grievous unto thee; But if thou haſt an eye to the Inheritance which is reſerved for thee, again it cannot but ſeem joyous unto thee. For the aſſurance of thy future reward will quite take away the ſenſe of the preſent ſmart.

Hitherto may be added out of the ſame holy Father that which followeth, as the ſumm of all that hitherto hath been ſaid. How great and wonderful is the mercy of God! He ſaith not, Labour thou for ten hundred thouſand years together; nor yet, one thouſand years, nor yet, five hundred years. But what? Labour whileſt thou liveſt; it is but for a few years; after that thou ſhalt have reſt, ſuch reſt as ſhall have no end. Conſider this well with thy ſelf, Thou art injoyned to labour but for a few years, and amidſt thy labour art not without ſome joy, not a day paſſeth in which thou mayeſt not receive comfort and conſolation. But rejoyce not thou after the manner of the World, but as the Apoſtle exhorteth, *Phil.* 4. 4. *Rejoyce*

in the Lord always: and again I ſay, Rejoyce: Rejoyce in Chriſt, Rejoyce in his Word, Rejoyce in his Law. For it is true which the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* Conſider what a ſmall price thou art to give, but the husk of an Acorn, for everlaſting treaſures: The husk of thy ſhort labour, for reſt Eternal. Haſt thou joy for a time? Do not truſt too much to it. Art thou ſad and ſorrowful for a time? Do not deſpair of joy and comfort. Neither let proſperity puff thee up, nor adverſity caſt thee down. God hath promiſed unto thee *Eternal Life*; Therefore contemn *Temporal felicity*. He hath threatned *Eternal Fire*; Therefore contemn all *Temporal ſorrows*.

To conclude then with the ſame Divine Author, Let us therefore be in love with *Eternal Life*; and thereby we ſhall come to know how much we ought to labour for the obtaining of it; for we ſee that thoſe men which are lovers of this preſent life, which is but temporal, and ſhall ſhortly have an end, labour with might and main to preſerve and prolong it as long as they can. And yet they cannot eſcape death; for that at one time or other will ſeize upon them. All that they can hope for, is

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but to put it off for a little time. When death approacheth, then every one is labouring and seeking to hide himself, ready to give and part with any thing that he hath to redeem his life. He sends for the Physician, he will be ruled by him in any thing, he will take any thing at his hands, he will suffer any thing, Purging, Bleeding, Cupping, Scarifying, and what not? You see what charge a man will be at, and what pains he will voluntarily endure, to live here though but for a short time; and yet he will scarce be at any charge, or take any pains, after this life ended to live for ever. Brethren, it should not be so. If there be such labouring and watching, such sending and going, such running and riding, such spending and praying, such doing and suffering, to live here a while longer; What should we not willingly do and suffer to live for ever? And if they be accounted wise, which labour by all means they can to put off death a while longer, being loth to lose a few days; What fools are they which live so, that finally they lose the day of *Eternity*.

Think upon those things well with your selves, O mortal men, and foresee the day of *Eternity*, whether of joy or of torment, before it cometh. For although all other thing pass away, yet *Eterni-*

ty ſtill remaineth, and ſhall never paſs away.

CHAP. I.

The Puniſhment of Eternal Death.

THe *Meſſenians* had a certain Priſon or Dungeon under earth void of air and light, and full of Helliſh horror: which as it was a moſt diſmal place, ſo had it alſo a glorious title; for it was called the *Treaſure-houſe*. This Priſon or Dungeon had no Doors at all to it, only one mouth, at which the Priſoners were let down by a Rope; and ſo it was ſtopped up again with a great ſtone. Into this *Treaſure-houſe* was *Philopæmon* that great Emperour of *Greece* caſt, and there by Poyſon he ended his life; God hath alſo his *Treaſure-houſe* under earth, if I may ſo ſpeak: But, I pray you, what a one is it? It is of moſt wicked and ungodly, deſperate and damned men.

Actiolinus a Tyrant of *Padua*, (as *Jovius* reporteth) had many Priſons ſo infamous for all kind of miſeries and torments, that whoſoever were caſt thereinto counted their life miſery, and their death happineſs. Death might come in there with-

without knocking, he was ſo welcome unto them, and ſo long looked for. For this was their hard uſage, they were laden with Irons, ſtarved with hunger, poyſoned with ſtench, eaten up with vermine, and ſo in a moſt miſerable manner they lived, and dyed at length a long and a lingering death. There every one was judged moſt miſerable, but he that was dead and could feel no miſery. Whileſt they lived it was a puniſhment worſe than death to have their habitation amongſt the dead. For the dead bodies lay on heaps rotting amongſt the living in ſuch manner, that it might be truly ſaid there, that the dead killed the living.

But the very worſt of theſe Priſons is a *Paradiſe*, and a moſt pleaſant place, if it be compared with the infernal Priſon of Hell. Whatſoever miſery was ſuffered in *Actiolinus* his Priſon, in this regard it was tolerable, becauſe it was of no long continuance, being to laſt no longer than a ſhort life, and quite vaniſhing away at the hour of death. But the Treaſure-houſe of the damned, which is Gods Priſon, is void of all comfort: The torments thereof are intolerable, becauſe they are *Eternal*. Death cannot enter in there, neither can thoſe that are entred get out again: But they ſhall be tormented for

evermore. For *evermore?* What a fearful thing is this; They ſhall be tormented for *evermore.* It was a moſt true ſaying of *Caſſiodorus.* As no mortal man can apprehend or underſtand what the *Eternal reward* is, ſo neither can any man conceive or imagine what that *Eternal torment* is.

The *Perſians* had a Priſon into which a man might enter eaſily, but being once in, could get out no more; or if he did, yet very hardly. And therefore it was called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion.* It is an eaſie matter to deſcend down into Hell; but to aſcend up again it is altogether impoſſible. Was ever any heard to return from Hell? This Priſon of Hell is not without juſt cauſe called *Lethe*, or *Oblivion.* For God is ſo unmindful of the damned, that he will *never* remember them to have mercy upon them. Hell is called the Land of *Oblivion* or *Forgetfulneſs*, and that for two reaſons (as a godly and Learned Writer obſerveth) Firſt, Becauſe, ſaith he, they remember God no more for their good, neither have they any memory at all of things paſt, but ſuch as doth afflict and torment them. All their pomp and glory, pleaſures and delights, are quite forgotten, or elſe not remembred without grief and ſorrow. Secondly, To thoſe that are in this horrid Region, and Lake of fire, God hath

hath forgotten to be gracious, and merciful, neither will he ſend his Angels at any time to Miniſter unto them the leaſt comfort: If once in, there is no coming out again. For what ſaid *Abraham* unto the rich Glutton frying in Hell; and deſiring him to ſend *Lazarus* to cool his tongue with a drop of water? *Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, ſo that they which would paſs from hence to you, cannot; neither can they paſs to us, that would come from thence, Luk.* 16. 26. Oh gulf full of horrour and deſpair! Oh *Eternity* of torments, the very thought whereof is able to make a ſtout man quake and tremble! The wicked and ungodly men dig their own Graves, and dwell therein for *evermore*: But what manner of Graves do they dig? They dig as deep as Hell, where the rich Glutton was buried, from whence *he liſted up his eyes in torments and ſaw* Abraham *afar off, and* Lazarus *in his boſom, Luke* 16. 23. to his greater torment. Oh what a terrible deep is this! Oh what a fearful Grave is this! Who lyeth here? He that ſuffered *Lazarus* to lye at his Gate, having no compaſſion on him. How is it with him now? He lodgeth in flames of Fire inſtead of his ſoft Bed: he is ſcalded with thirſt, and his ſweet Cups are taken from his mouth; his Table is removed, and he hath no other

Food but Fire and Brimſtone; he is not now dancing and exulting for joy, but gnaſhing his teeth for helliſh deſperation. They that are ſhut up in Priſon here in this World, have hope for their comfort; it may be they ſhall be delivered, and redeemed out of Priſon: But from Hell there is no deliverance, no redemption, no not ſo much as any hope at all, but Eternal deſperation.

It is a ſhort, but a terrible Sermon that God Preacheth by the Prophet *Ezekiel* in theſe words, *Say to the Forreſt of the South, Hear the word of the Lord, Behold, I will kindle a Fire in thee, and it ſhall devour every green Tree in thee, and every dry Tree: The flaming Flame ſhall not be quenched, Ezek.* 20. 47. How many tall Cedars, how many wicked and ungodly men flouriſh and wax green in this life for proſperous ſucceſs in all outward things, and yet are dry and withered for want of virtue! Hear this therefore every green, and yet dry and withered Tree. *I will kindle a Fire, ſaith the Lord, and the flaming Flame ſhall not be quenched.* In Hell, whither you make ſuch great haſte, there are no Holy-days, no Feſtivals, no ſet times in which the Fire ſhall ceaſe burning. There is Eternal grief, Eternal death, Eternal ſorrow, without the mixture of the leaſt comfort

comfort. Night and day there is no reſt, no ſleep at all, but continually watching and waking for grief, and anguiſh, and intolerable torments in everlaſting Fire. There ſhall you always have your being, that you may always be tormented: There ſhall you always live, that you may always die. If you will not believe me, believe St. *Auguſtine*, whoſe words are theſe; The ungodly, ſaith he, ſhall live in torments: but they which live in torments ſhall deſire, if it were poſſible, that their life were ended. But death hears them not, there is none to take away their life; their life ſhall never end, becauſe their torment ſhall never end. But what ſaith the Scripture? The Scripture doth not ſo much as call it life. For life is a name of comfort: but what comfort can there be imagined in tortures and torments, frying and broiling in everlaſting Fire? But what doth the Scripture call it? *The ſecond death*, that is, a death which followeth after the firſt and natural death which is common to all men. But how can the ſecond death be called a death, ſeeing that he that hath part therein never dieth? We may better indeed expreſs what it is not, rather than what it is. As it cannot properly be called a death, ſo it may be truly ſaid that it is no life: And as con-

cerning them that have part therein, as they cannot properly be ſaid ever to die, ſo again it may be moſt truly ſaid that they never live. For ſo to live, that a man ſhall always live in ſorrow and torments, is not to live. Therefore that life is no life; but the only life indeed is that life which is bleſſed; and that life only is bleſſed, which is Eternal. Again, we have another place in the ſame Father to this purpoſe: if the ſoul liveth in Eternal torments, tormented with the unclean ſpirits, this is rather to be called Eternal death, than Eternal life. For there is no greater or worſe death, then that death which never dieth.

St. *Gregory* alſo giveth the like Teſtimony. In Hell, ſaith he, there ſhall be death without death, and without end, becauſe death ever liveth, and the end ever beginneth: there death ſhall never die. Oh death, how much ſweeter wert thou if thou wouldſt take away life, and not compel thoſe to live, who would fain die! But ſo it is, the number of the years in Hell are without number. It paſſeth the skill of the beſt *Arithmetician* to find out the number thereof. God himſelf knoweth no end thereof. After a Thouſand Thouſand Millions of years paſt, there are ſtill as many more to come, and when

when thoſe alſo are paſt, there are yet as many more to come; and ſtill they are as far from the laſt as they were at the firſt. It is now above five thouſand years ſince *Cain* that ſlew his Brother *Abel*, was caſt into the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone; and yet the number of the years throughoutwhich ſtill he is to be tormented, is as great ſtill as it was the firſt day of his torment; and after certain Millions of years, the years of his torments for their number ſhall be nothing diminiſhed: It ſhall be all one as if he were caſt into the Fire but this preſent hour. And though the rich Gluton mentioned in the Goſpel, be tormented two thouſand years together, yet ſtill he doth burn, and ſhall burn for ever; neither ſhall he obtain ſo much as a little drop of water, though he uſe never ſo much intreaty, not ſo much as a little drop of water to cool his inflamed tongue.

Theſe things we often hear of, and when we hear of them, we do but laugh at them. Certainly we count it but a light matter to burn in Eternal Fire. Here a man might well ask the Queſtion, *Where are your tears, O mortal men, ye that are given ſo much to laughing?* This is our condition: A ſmall loſs if it be but a matter of three half pence, will wring great

great ſtore of tears from us: but as for an infinite and irrecoverable loſs, that we can brook eaſily, we can digeſt that with laughter. When we are cited to appear at the Barr of an earthly Judge, then we quake and tremble: but as we are going to Gods Tribunal, (for every day we rid ſome of our way, we walk on, ſtep after ſtep, will we, nill we; and (yet as we are going) we ſport by the way. When we go to Sea, we are afraid of Shipwrack: But without either fear or wit we lanch into the deep Sea of *Eternity*, and make but a laughing matter of it.

It is the wiſh of St. *Bernard*, Oh that men were wiſe! that they were wiſe! Oh that they were wiſe! What then, holy *Bernard*? Oh, then would the Image of *Eternity* begin to be reformed in them Then would they order things preſent wiſely, judge of things paſt underſtandingly, and foreſee things to come providently.

Here we have St. *Pauls* command to the *Epheſians*, and not his wiſh only, for his words run in the *Imperative mood*, and not in the *Optative*: Brethren, *See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe, Redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil*, *Eph.* 5. 15, 16. The great buſineſs of our ſalvation, ought circumſpectly,

ly, diligently, and carefully to be regarded of us. It is the moſt fooliſh thing in the World for a man having but little time allotted him, to ſpend it prodigally in vain delights, whereas he ſhould like a thriſty Merchant imploy it rather for his beſt advantage, to purchaſe a portion in bleſſed *Eternity*. If we think to gain Heaven by ſporting, playing, and idleing, we are much deceived. To be telling of tales, or giving ear unto them when they are told; to be given to our eaſe, and ſpend our time in idleneſs; to be calling for our Cups, and ſit ſo long at them till we cannot ſtand. This is not to redeem the time. But this is truly to redeem the time, to give our ſelves to labour and ſtudy, prayer and meditation; not for a ſpurt and away, but to hold on in this courſe conſtantly unto the end; This, I ſay, is truly to redeem the time. It is the counſel of St. *Auguſtine*, to ſteal ſome time from our worldly buſineſs. Will any man Sue thee at the Common Law? Be content, ſaith he, to loſe ſomething, that thou mayeſt be at leiſure to ſerve God, and not follow Suits: for that which thou loſeſt, is the gaining of time. For as thou giveſt thy money and buyeſt Bread; ſo be content to loſe thy money, that thou mayeſt buy reſt, and opportunity to ſerve God:

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for this is indeed truly to redeem the time.

So ought we to spare for no cost, but willingly part with any thing to gain an opportunity of doing good, seeing that the days are evil. The days of this life are full of sorrows, griefs, dangers, and tentations; which ever and anon take from us the opportunity of doing good; so saith *Anselm*. But if we let slip the opportunity of doing good when it is offered, and let our days consume away in meer purposes of amendment of life, without bringing them to good effect: from henceforth it is in vain to look for any opportunity of doing good; we shall not obtain one minute of time; our loss is altogether irrecoverable. Our life, saith *Nazianzen*, is like a *Mart* or a *Fair*: When the day appointed is once over, there is no more buying any commodities. If then we will buy any thing, we must do it quickly, whilest the Fair lasts: We must live godlily, whilest we have time to live We must serve God, whilest we are strong and able. The Preacher often beats upon this, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, *Eccles.* 9. 19. The Apostle often spurs us on to lay hold upon opportunity, and make good use of our time. *As therefore we have opportunity, let*

let us do good to all men, *Gal.* 6. 10. For *now it is high time to awake out of ſleep*, *Rom.* 13. 11. Thou ſleepeth, ſaith St. *Ambroſe*, but thy time ſleepeſt not, it runneth apace, yea, it flies with wings. Happy he, happy they that think upon theſe things, to do thereafter; that live ſo, as at the point of death they will deſire to have lived; to do ſuch things, as they will rejoyce to have done when they are Tranſlated to *Eternity*. *A light neglect now will prove an Eternal loſs.* Whatſoever we think, ſpeak, or do, once thought, ſpoke, or done, it is Eternal, it abideth for ever.

CHAP. II.

The reward of Eternal Life.

THe life in Heaven is life indeed, and the moſt perfect and abſolute life of all others, in that it is *animal*, in that it is *humane*, in that it is *angelical*, yea in that it is *Divine*. There lives the *Memory*, by the perfect remembrance of all things that are paſt: There lives the *Underſtanding*, by the knowledge and Viſion of God: There lives the *Will*, and enjoyeth all manner of good, without fear of loſing it.

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In like manner liveth there the *Appetite*, both that which is called *Concupiscible*, and that which is called *Irascible*. There live all the *Senses*, and are filled with delights. There is heard no sighing no lamentation, no grief or sorrow, nor so much as the least sign thereof. There is the most sincere and pure song of joy, without the mixture of the least drop of the Gall of bitterness and sorrow. Let the *eyes* be silent, they never saw the like; let the *ears* be silent, they never heard the like; let thy *heart* be silent, it could never conceive the like to this life. This life includeth within it self all pleasures, riches, honours, and all the delights of all lives, senses, and faculties. St *Augustine* as it were set on Fire with the fervent desire of this life, breaketh forth into these words. How great happiness shall be there, where there is the presence of no evil, and the absence of no good? where we shall be continually praising God, who is all in all; *Blessed are they that dwell in thy House; they will be still praising thee, Psal.* 84. 4. All the faculties of our souls and members of our bodies being made incorruptible, shall be ever setting forth the praise of God. There shall be true glory and praise indeed,

Augustin. de Civitate Dei, cap. 30.

deed, where neither he that doth give praiſe and glory can be deceived, nor he to whom it is given can be flattered. There ſhall be true honour indeed, which ſhall be denied to none that is worthy, nor beſtowed upon any that is unworthy, yea, which none that is unworthy ſhall deſire or ſeek after; where none that is unworthy ſhall be permitted to abide. There he which is the giver of virtue, ſhall be the reward thereof: for he hath promiſed himſelf; and what could he promiſe greater and better than himſelf? The Prophet *Jeremy* is witneſs of this his promiſe, in theſe words, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People, Jerem.* 31. 33. I will be unto them whatſoever with honeſty can be deſired, I will be unto them life, and health, and food, and plenty, and glory, and honour, and peace, and every good thing: For this is the meaning of theſe words, *God ſhall be all in all*; He ſhall be the end of our deſires. And one great good there is to be found in that bleſſed City of God, which is not elſewhere to be found, and that is this, That no inferiour there ſhall envy his ſuperiour, but they ſhall be like members of the natural body compacted together in a friendly and peaceable manner, where the finger deſireth not to be the eye, nor the foot

foot the head, but every member is content with his own place. And a little after ſaith the ſame Father, there ſhall we keep an Eternal Sabbath of reſt, and there ſhall we taſte and ſee how ſweet the Lord is, we ſhall be filled with his goodneſs, when he ſhall be all in all. O God my God! Thou art Love and Charity, Truth and Verity, true *Eternity* and Eternal Felicity. *Auguſt. de Civitat. Dei.*

Another ſpeaketh unto this life, by way of *Apoſtrophe*, after this manner, in thee there is no corruption, nor defect, nor old Age, nor anger; but perpetual peace, and ſolemn glory, and everlaſting joy, and continual ſolemnity. There is joy and exultation, there is an Eternal ſpring. There is always the flower and grace of youth and perfect health. *Autor. libr. de Spir. & anima.*

Non eſt in te Heri nec Heſternum:
Sed eſt idem Hodiernum.
Tibi ſalus, tibi vita,
Tibi pax eſt infinita:
Tibi Deus omnia. That is,
Yeſterday was with thee never;
But to day is preſent ever:
Thou haſt peace that ever laſteth,
Health and life that never waſteth;
God is all in all.

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Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O City of God, Pſal. 87. 3. In thee have their habitation all thoſe that rejoyce; in thee there is no fear; in thee no ſorrow. All deſires are turned to joys. Whatſoever a man can wiſh for is preſent with thee: Whatſoever can be deſired, is in thee in abundance. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy Houſe; and thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy pleaſures, Pſal.* 36. 8. *For with thee is the Fountain of Life; in thy light ſhall we ſee light,* 9. When we ſhall ſee thee in thy ſelf, and thee in us, and our ſelves in thee, living in everlaſting felicity, and enjoying the beatifical viſion of thee for ever.

And though this felicity be everlaſting; yet a man may obtain it in a ſhort time, and with little labour. *I have compaſſion on the multitude,* ſaith our Saviour, *becauſe they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat, Mark* 8. 2. Sweet Saviour, doſt thou count it ſuch a matter for us to abide with thee three days, and eat nothing? and why, ſweet Jeſus, doſt thou not rather tell us of the days of *Eternity*, and the everlaſting joys wherewith we ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied in the Kingdom of Heaven? God taketh notice of the leaſt ſervice that we perform, and

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it is precious in his ſight: He telleth the very hairs of our heads; and much more then will he tell the drops of blood that are ſpilt for his ſake, and put them up in the Bottle of his remembrance.

We may therefore very well cry out with St. *Hierom*, Oh! How great a bleſſedneſs is this, to receive great things for ſmall, and Eternal things for Temporal; and further to have the Lord our Debtor! But thou wilt be ready to ſay, it goes hard to be in ſufferings every day; and though all other things might eaſily be endured, yet death is terrible. Chriſtian Brother, I am aſhamed to hear thee ſay ſo, it is fooliſhly ſpoken, and like a Child. Knoweſt thou not thus much? I know that I aſcend to deſcend, flouriſh to wither, am young to grow old, live to die, and die to live bleſſed *Eternally*. *Truſt* therefore *in the Lord for ever*; *For in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength*, *Iſa.* 26. 4.

Again, St. *Auguſtine* comes into my mind, who upon the Words of our Lord ſaith thus, Our Lord and Saviour concluded with theſe words, ſaying, *Theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment*, *but the righteous into life Eternal*, *Matth.* 25. 46. It is life Eternal that is here promiſed. Becauſe men love to live here upon earth, therefore life is promiſed unto them:

them: And becauſe they are much afraid to die, therefore death Eternal is threatned unto them. What wouldeſt thou have? Life; Well, thou ſhalt have it. What art thou afraid of? Is it Death? Well, thou ſhalt not ſuffer it. But they which ſhall be tormented in Hell Fire, ſhall have a deſire to die; and death ſhall fly from them. *To live long* therefore is no great matter; yea more, *To live always*, is no great matter; but *To live bleſſed*, that is a thing to be deſired, that is a great matter indeed.

Therefore thou ſhalt live in Heaven, and ſhalt never die; there ſhalt thou live bleſſed for evermore; for neither ſhalt thou ſuffer any evil; neither ſhalt thou be in fear of ſuffering it; for there it is impoſſible to ſuffer any evil. There ſhalt thou poſſeſs whatſoever thou canſt deſire; and what thou poſſeſſeſt, thou ſhalt deſire ſtill to poſſeſs: Thou canſt not be caſt out of poſſeſſion; and this ſhall ſatisfie thee. It was there, that *David* did expect to have his thirſt quenched, and his hunger ſatisfied. *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are Pleaſures for evermore*, *Pſal.* 15. 11. And again, *My ſoul thirſteth after thee*, *Pſal.* 141. 6. And yet again, *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied,*

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when I awake, with thy likeneſs, Pſal. 17.15. This is a new and a ſtrange voice for a King: He hath his Table well furniſhed with all kinds of Diſhes; and yet as if he were hunger-ſtarved he hopes to be filled at anothers Table; his own Bread and his own Wine would not ſerve his turn, to appeaſe his hunger, or to quench his thirſt. There was other Bread that he had a mind to, and other Liquor that he ſo thirſted after, the Bread of Heaven, and the Water of Life. For what is the plenty and abundance of all the Kings of the Earth? It is nothing elſe but meer want. And what is the dainty Fare at their great Tables? It is but like the Beggars Pitcher, if it be compared with the Fatneſs of Gods Houſe, and his Heavenly Table. Come Eat and Drink, and be filled, my beloved ſhall the King of Heaven ſay; this Feaſt of mine ſhall never be ended; there ſhall come no ſorrow after it; as it is *To day*, ſo it ſhall be *For ever* and *ever*. Neither can St. *Auguſtine* here contain himſelf, but he breaks forth again into this Exclamation, Oh life of lives ſurpaſſing all life! Oh everlaſting life! Oh life bleſſed for ever! Where there is joy without ſorrow, reſt without labour, riches without loſs, health without ſickneſs (there is no ſuch matter in this life) abundance without

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defect, life without death, perpetuity without corruptibility, beatitude without calamity; where all good men are in perfect charity, where all knowledge is in all things, and through all things; where the Majesty of God is seen in presence, where the mind of the beholders is filled with the bread of life: They always behold Gods presence, and still they desire to behold it; they desire to behold it, and yet without anxiety; they are satisfied with it, and yet without satiety.

And that thou mayest understand and know, good Christian Brother, that this superexcellent Glory, these cœlestial Riches, this Heavenly Kingdom is to be bought, hear what the same St. *Augustine* saith, I have to sell, saith God, I have to sell; come and buy it. Lord, what is it that thou hast to sell? I have rest; Come and buy it. What is the price of it? The price is labor. And how much labor is Eternal rest worth? If thou wilt speak the truth and judge aright, Eternal rest is worth Eternal labor. It is true indeed; but do not fear: For God is merciful. For should thy labor be Eternal, thou shouldest never attain to rest Eternal; but that thou mayest attain at length to rest Eternal, therefore thy labor shall not be Eternal; *Eccles.* 5. 7.

Eternal; not but that it is worth so much, but that thou mayest at length get the possession of it. Indeed it is worth the price, though it be labour Eternal; but that it may be purchased and possessed, it is necessary that the price thereof be but labour Temporal. Therefore Christian Brethren, let us rouse up our selves, and stir up one another with this exhortation of St. *Augustine*, which here followeth.

Let us set before our eyes the life which is Eternal, and let us well consider the nature of it, which we shall come the better to understand, by removing from it, whatsoever we account troublesome in this life. For it is easier to find what it is not, rather than what it is. And yet it is set to sale. Thou mayest buy it if thou wilt. Thou shall not need to be much troubled or turmoiled about it, for the greatness of the price. The price is whatsoever thou hast, and no more. Never examine what thou hast, but consider what thou art. It is worth thy buying, though thou givest thy self for it. Give thy self, and thou shalt have it. What? Art thou to sell thy self? Art thou to buy thy self? Behold, such as thou art, if thou canst be content to give thy self, thou shalt have it. But thou wilt be ready to say it may be. Alack! I am a wicked man; and such

ſuch a man perhaps will not be received for good payment: If thou beeſt not already good, do but give thy ſelf, and by ſo doing thou ſhalt become good, and go for current. Do but make a faithful promiſe to give thy ſelf; and this ſhall make thee good: And being made good thou art a price of thy ſelf good enough: And thou ſhalt have, as I ſaid, not only health, ſafety, life, and ſuch like as ſhall have an end; but alſo thou ſhalt be freed from many miſeries: Thou ſhalt neither be wearied, nor ſtand in need of reſt, thou ſhalt neither hunger nor thirſt, neither increaſe nor decreaſe, neither grow young nor wax old, becauſe there is no being born there; for there is full growth and ſtature, and the entire and perfect number of years. There is no number like unto it: For as it hath no need of being augmented, ſo is there no fear of being diminiſhed. Behold what excellent things are ſpoken of it! And yet I cannot come near telling thee what it is, or what good things are treaſured up in it: For, it is written, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 9. And how ſhould my mouth be able to utter what the heart of man is not able to conceive?

And becauſe we have gone along

through St. *Auguſtines* Books, as it were through ſo many pleaſant Gardens, and are now brought at length to the Cœleſtial *Paradiſe*, let us ſeal and confirm what hitherto hath been ſpoken, by the teſtimony of the ſame Father. If we were every day, ſaith he, to ſuffer all torments, yea the torments of Hell it ſelf, and that for a long time together, to the end that we might behold Chriſt in his Glory, and have communion and fellowſhip with the Saints; were it not worth our pains and ſufferings! who would not ſuffer any ſorrow to be made partaker of ſo much good, and ſo great Glory? Let the Devils then lie in wait for me, let them aſſault with temptations; let my body be brought down with faſting, let my fleſh be kept under with preſſure; let me be wearied with labours, let my moiſture be dried up with watching; let one man clamour againſt me, let another diſquiet me, let me be bowed together with cold, let me be ſet on fire with heat; let my conſcience murmur, let my head ake, let my breaſt be inflamed, let my ſtomach be troubled with ventoſities, let my countenance wax pale and bleak, let me be full of infirmities; let my life conſume away with grief, and my years with mourning; let rottenneſs enter into my bones, and let it ſpring up like

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a Fountain under my feet; let all theſe miſeries come upon me, ſo that I may have reſt and conſolation in the day of tribulation, and aſcend up unto the people of the Lord. For, What ſhall be the Glory of the juſt, and how great ſhall the joy of the Saints be, when every face ſhall ſhine as the Sun! When the Lord ſhall begin to reckon up his people in their diſtinct orders, in his Fathers Kingdom; and when he ſhall render unto every man according to his works, the rewards which he hath promiſed, that is, *Heavenly* for *Earthly*, and *Eternal* for *Temporal*.

Think therefore upon the days of old, and call to mind the years which are yet for to come. Think upon *Eternity*, O man, think upon *Eternity*; think upon the *Eternity* of Torment, and the *Eternity* of Joy, which is to follow after this ſhort life ended, and I dare warrant thee, thou wilt never complain of any Adverſity; thou wilt never let ſlip out of thy mouth ſuch a word as this, *This is too grievous*, or, *This is intolerable*, or, *This is too hard*: Thou wilt, I dare ſay, count all things eaſie and tolerable whatſoever can happen in this life, and thou wilt never be better pleaſed, than when thou art moſt afflicted.

It is reported by *John Moſchus* of one

Olympius, an old man of ſingular patience (who lived cloyſtered up in a Monaſtery near unto *Jordan)* that he had his mind ſo bent and fixt continually upon *Eternity*, that he had ſcarce any ſenſe or feeling at all of any temporal ſorrow or miſery. For, (as he goes on with his ſtory) upon a time, as it happened, a certain Religious man turned out of his way to viſit him, and finding him in a dark Cell, a place, as he thought, unhabitable by reaſon of heat and ſwarms of Gnats and other Flies; not without much admiration ſpake thus unto him. And canſt thou, *Olympius*, endure to live in ſuch a cloſe Room, ſo exceeding hot, and ſo much preſſed with Gnats, and ſwarms of flies? But what did *Olympius* anſwer? And doſt thou wonder at this? I tell thee, my Son, all theſe are but light matters? I count them tolerable, that ſo I may eſcape Eternal torments, which are intolerable. I can endure to be ſtung by Gnats, that ſo I may not feel the ſting of Conſcience, and the gnawing of the worm that never dieth. This heat which thou ſo complaineſt of I can ſuffer eaſily, when I think upon the *Eternal fire* of Hell, which is unſufferable. Theſe troubles, if I may ſo call them, are but ſhort, and ſhall have an end; but the torments in Hell are without end. Whereupon ſaid the other,

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Certainly, *Olympius*, thou art led by the ſpirit of wiſdom and truth; ſo wiſely and truly haſt thou anſwered. I would there were more of thy mind, that would think thus ſeriouſly upon theſe things; then certainly there would be more than there are now adays, that would after thy example patiently ſuffer and endure all things.

CHAP. III.

The Concluſion of all.

ZEuxis, the moſt Famous for his skill amongſt all the Antient Painters that we have heard of, was obſerved to be very ſlow at his work, and to let no piece of his go abroad into the world to be ſeen of men, till he had turned it over and over, this ſide and that ſide, again and again, to ſee if he could ſpy any fault in it, And being upon a time asked the reaſon why he was ſo curious, why ſo long in drawing his lines, and ſo ſlow in the uſe of his Pencil, he made this anſwer, I am long a doing whatſoever I take in hand, becauſe what I Paint, I Paint for *Eternity*. And thus ſtands the caſe with all, we Paint alſo for *Eternity*. Whatſoever we do, it ſo belongs unto *Eternity*, that a man may truly ſay of

it thus, I write, I read, I ſing, I pray, I labor, whatſoever I do, whatſoever I ſay, whatſoever I think, all is for *Eternity*. Now if this be the nature of our thoughts, words and deeds, if they ſhall remain *for all Eternity*, we had need have a care what we think, ſpeak or do; it concerns us to look about us, to mind our buſineſs, not to go negligently and ſleepily about our work, not to let any thing go out of our hands rude and imperfect, but to poliſh and perfect it with all the care, skill, and induſtry that we can uſe. We Paint with *Zeuxis for Eternity*. When we have done our works, they are preſently tranſmitted to *Eternity*, to be viewed by a moſt judicious and all-ſeeing eye, that no fault can eſcape; and being viewed and cenſured, they are to be committed either to be Eternally puniſhed, or Eternally rewarded. What I have ſaid before, I here ſay again, becauſe it cannot be ſaid too often, though I ſhould ſay it a thouſand times; whatſoever we think, ſpeak, or do, once thought, ſpake, or done, it is Eternal, it abideth for ever.

Will you hear what St. *Gregory* ſaith? In all our actions we muſt uſe great care and circumſpection, we muſt well weigh and conſider with our ſelves, what it is that we take in hand, and to what end we do

do it, that our minds be not ſet upon any thing that is *Temporal*, but upon thoſe things which are Eternal. Therefore in all thy actions labour to be perfect. Pray for *Eternity*, ſtudy for *Eternity*, ſuffer for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, labor for *Eternity*. So live to God, that thou mayeſt live with God; ſo live on Earth, that thou mayeſt live in Heaven; ſo live for *Eternity*, that thou mayeſt live to *Eternity*.

Hear alſo what St. *Bernard* ſaith. Our works do not paſs away as ſoon as they are done (as they may ſeem to do) but as Seeds ſown in time they riſe up to all *Eternity*. The fooliſh man which hath no underſtanding, will wonder to ſee ſuch a plentiful increaſe riſe up of ſuch little Seeds, be it good or be it evil, according to the nature of the Seed which is ſown. But he that is wiſe will ponder theſe things, and count no ſin little: For he hath an eye ſtill not to that which is preſent, but to that which is to come; not to that which is ſown, but to that which is reaped; not to that which is done in time, but to that which remains to all *Eternity*.

Oh the dangerous and miſerable madneſs of the Sons of *Adam*! God created us unto the poſſeſſion of infinite and Eternal goods: And why are we carried

then with the whole bent of our affections, to those things which are flitting and vanishing? God made us heirs of Heaven and Eternal possessions: And why do we so miserably intangle our selves in our vanities, and run headlong to destruction? Let us be wise in time, let us look well to our steps, let us make speed on the way of *Eternity:* Let us so live that we may live to *Eternity.* The way thither is short and narrow, but the term thereof is very large.

But O miserable and foolish men that we are! We fain would obtain Eternal life, but we are loath to tread in the way that leads to it: We fain would be there; but we will not take pains to go thither. Every man desires to be blessed. There is no man, saith St. *Augustine,* of what condition or degree soever he be, but hath a desire after that life which is blessed for ever. Therefore that life is the common haven at which all men desire to arrive; but all men know not how to steer their course aright. It is a thing which all men without controversie would fain possess; but how to compass it, what course to take, which way to go, that is the point they cannot agree upon. We may seek it long enough upon Earth; and it is a Question, whether we shall ever find it

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or no. Not that I condemn the ſeeking of it, but the not ſeeking of it in the right place. One is of opinion that the Soldiers life is moſt bleſſed. But another denies that, and ſays, the life of the Husbandman is moſt bleſſed. And again, this another denies, and ſays, that the Lawyers life is moſt bleſſed; and he gives his reaſon for it: For the Lawyer is worſhipped by the people, and is much ſought unto, he is ever taking of fees and pleading cauſes.

And again, this another denies, and ſayes, the Judges life is moſt bleſſed: For he hath power of hearing cauſes and deciding them. And yet again, another denies this, and ſays, the Merchants life is moſt bleſſed: For he ſees divers Countries, learns many faſhions, gathers together much Wealth. You ſee, dearly beloved, in ſo many ſeveral kinds of lives there is not any one to be found, that will pleaſe all. But the life bleſſed for ever, that is it which pleaſeth all.

Bleſſedneſs therefore is not to be expected here, but is to be ſought for elſewhere, and never to be found out, but by a good and godly death. Ungodly men themſelves deſire to die the death of the Godly, but they will not live the life of the Godly: For to die well is the way to felicity; but

to live well is matter of labor; and yet that is not to be obtained without this. *Eternity* depends upon death, and there is no dying well without living well. Chuse which thou wilt, life or death. If thou liveſt well, thou canſt not but die well; and it ſhall be well with thee for ever; If thou liveſt not well, thou canſt not hope to die well, but it will be ill with thee for ever.

Not many years ago a man of a good Houſe, having more wit in his head, than Religion in his heart, being asked what he thought of the ſtrict lives of the Religious, and the looſe lives of the licentious, which he eſteemed beſt, anſwered thus, I could wiſh to live like the licentious, but to die like the Religious. Some wit there might be in his anſwer, but I am ſure there was little Religion in it. He had ſpoke like a Chriſtian man, if he had ſaid thus, I deſire to live the life of the Religious, that my end may be like his. *Balaam* could ſay, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his*, *Numb.* 23. 10. But he had ſaid a great deal better, if he had ſaid thus, *Let me live the life of the righteous, that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my laſt end may be like his.* For whoſoever liveth the life of the Godly, ſhall be ſure to die the death of the Godly:

And

And whoſoever liveth the life of the ungodly, ſhall be ſure to die the death of the ungodly: Once he ſhall die, but that once ſhall be always, and that always for ever and ever.

A certain Soldier being called in queſtion by *Laniachus* a Centurion, for ſome miſdemeanor or other committed in the Camp, earneſtly deſired pardon for that once, and promiſed never to offend in the like kind again: But the Centurion made him this anſwer, *In bello, bone vir, non licebit bis peccare: Oh Sir, know you thus much, there is no offending in War twice.* But in death (alas!) there is no offending once; there is no hope of pardon, once dead and always dead. He that dies once ill, is damned for ever. There is no returning again to life, to amend what is done amiſs. There is no appealing from the ſentence of condemnation, if it be once paſſed. As death leaves a man, ſo judgment findeth him; and as judgment leaves him, ſo *Eternity* findeth him.

It is the ſaying of *Iphicrates*, that it is a ſhame for an Emperor at any time to ſay with the fool, *Non putâram, I did not think it:* But it is a greater ſhame for a Chriſtian man to ſay, *Non putâram, I did not think* there had been ſuch a difference between a chaſte life, and a voluptuous life,

life, *I did not think* that *Eternity* was to follow after this life, *I did not think* that I ſhould have died ſo ſuddenly. Alas! alas! How ſleepily do we go about the buſineſs of *Eternity*! Whereas the nature of this mortal life of ours is ſuch, that we cannot be certain at any time that we ſhall live for any time, no not ſo much as for one minute, when as we know for certain that we muſt depart from hence, and yet are moſt uncertain at what hour we ſhall depart; and when that hour ſhall come, then alſo we ſhall ſeem not ſo much to have lived, as to have poſted unto death in a moment. Here we are but as ſojourners in a ſtrange Land, and not as Citizens in our own Country; we are but Tenants at will, and not Free-holders: Will we, nill we, we muſt depart, *For here we have no continuing City, but we ſeek one to come, Heb.* 13. 14.

The holy Prophet *Baruch* asketh this queſtion, *Where are the Princes of the Heathen become, and ſuch as ruled the Beaſts upon the Earth, that hoarded up Silver and Gold, and made no end of their getting? Baruch* 3. 16, 17. Do they retain and keep their Kingdoms and their glory ſtill? Not ſo; For thus ſaith the Prophet, anſwering his own queſtion, *They are vaniſhed, and gone down to the Grave, and others*

are

are come up in their ſteads. They are vaniſhed, ſaith the Prophet; For they were but ſojourners and no Citizens; *they are gone, and others are come up in their ſteads*; their Houſes are let out to others, and they are caſt out themſelves, and gone down to the Grave. But if the queſtion be asked again, *Where are the Princes of Heaven*, whoſe dwelling is above the ſeventh Sphere, where are they? It may be anſwered likewiſe, that *They are alſo vaniſhed, and others are come up in their ſteads*; but they are tranſlated to the Kingdom of Heaven, there to abide for ever, without all fear of being diſpoſſeſſed.

Let us Crown our ſelves with Roſe-buds, *Wiſd.* 2. 8. Sing thoſe men of moſt looſe and deplorable lives. Why with Roſe-buds? Becauſe the beauty and ſmell of them is gone in one day, and they are withered: And ſuch fading Crowns do beſt become thoſe which ſhall ſhortly periſh. But as for the Bleſſed, it is not ſo with them, but they are Crowned with Jewels and precious Stones, whoſe beauty never fadeth. The woman mentioned in the *Revelation* had *upon her head a Crown*, not of Roſe-buds of the Garden, not of Jewels of the Sea, but of the Stars of Heaven. As then the Heavenly orbs are incorruptible, ſo likewiſe they that inhabit them are incor-

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incorruptible, they are not ſubject to any change, they are immortal. *The Righteous live for evermore, Wiſd.* 5. 15. All worldly things are tranſitory, but heavenly things are everlaſting. Here are we wearied with labour, but there ſhall we be refreſhed with Eternal reſt. Why do we ſeek for reſt before our labour is ended? We are yet upon the Stage: Therefore we muſt act our parts: We have to deal with potent Enemies; therefore we muſt be always prepared to Fight: We are ſtill in our race; therefore we muſt hold out to the laſt. Let us then ſo act our parts, that the Angels may rejoyce to be Spectators: Let us ſo Fight that we may win the Crown; let us ſo run, that we may obtain.

Well ſaith St. *Gregory*, if we well conſider with our ſelves what and how great things are promiſed unto us in Heaven, all things on earth will ſeem vile unto us: For what tongue can ſufficiently expreſs, or what heart conceive, how great the joys be in that City which is above? Where we ſhall bear a part in the heavenly *Quire* with Angels evermore lauding and praiſing God; where we ſhall be in Gods preſence, and ſee him face to face; where we ſhall behold light incomprehenſible; where we ſhall have the priviledge of heavenly Saints and

and Citizens, to be for ever incorruptible. Methinks I find my mind inflamed and ſet on Fire, whileſt I am ſpeaking of theſe joys, and methinks it ſhould ſet on Fire all that hear it. Methinks it ſhould ſo work upon us all, that even now we ſhould moſt earneſtly and ardently deſire to be there, where we hope to be for ever hereafter. But thus much we muſt know, that there is no coming there without much labor. It is not I, but *Paul* the Preacher that ſaith it, *A man is not Crowned, except he ſtrive lawfully*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. Let then the greatneſs of the reward encourage us and prick us forward; and let not the labor and pains, the ſhort labor, and the little pains, hinder us or keep us back. We muſt go on, and we muſt go on with perſeverance; we muſt not ſo much conſider the roughneſs of the way, as the bleſſed *Eternity* which is the end thereof. And this the ſame holy Father declares moſt excellently, ſaying, This is a ſpecial badg and cognizance of the elect, that they know how to carry themſelves in the way of this preſent life in ſuch manner, that by the certainty of hope they are aſſured, that they have attained unto a great pitch, inaſmuch as they ſee all tranſitory things far beneath them, and for the love of *Eternity* trample all ſublunary things under

der their feet. And this is it which the Lord ſpeaketh by the mouth of his holy Prophet, ſaying unto every ſoul that followeth him, *I will lift thee up above the high places of the Earth.* For as for loſſes, reproaches, poverty, diſgrace, and ſuch like, theſe are, as I may ſo call them, the lower places of the earth, which the lovers of this world, as they walk through the plain of the broad way, do not love to come near, but keep off as far as is poſſible. But as for gain and profit, the fawning and flattering of inferiors, abundance of riches, honors, and places of dignity, theſe are the high places of the earth, which whoſoever is worldly-minded, and hath ſetled his affections on things here below, he, I ſay, eſteemeth highly; becauſe to him they ſeem great: But whoſoever is heavenly minded, and hath ſetled his affections on things above, he, I ſay, eſteemeth them not; becauſe to him they ſeem what they are, that is, vile and baſe. For as it is with a man going up an high Mountain, ſtill the higher he goes, the lower he ſees the earth beneath him: So it is with him whoſe converſation is in Heaven; the higher he mounts from the earth with the wings of pious cogitations, the farther he flies from the earth with the wings of his affections. He knows that all the

the glory of this world is nothing, and therefore his thoughts and affections are altogether upon another world. This is the man that is *lifted up above the high places of the earth.*

You have heard what St. *Gregory* ſaith; It will not be amiſs in the next place to hear likewiſe what St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, What is that? It is a Leſſon worth our learning. That which we muſt loſe, ſaith he, one time or other upon neceſſity, it is wiſdom to diſtribute abroad in time, that we may purchaſe thereby the reward of *Eternity.* *Moſes* lived long indeed, he lived in health; but at length *he died.* *Methuſelah* lived longer than he; but it follows, *And he died.* This is, or ſhall be every mans Epitaph, *Et mortuus eſt, And he died.* *For we muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground,* 2 *Sam.* 14. 14. But the ſoul is immortal, it is Eternal, it ſhall live for ever, either in *Eternal glory,* or elſe in *Eternal torments.* Here our lot is caſt in which *Eternity* we ſhall have part, and there is no revoking it. Oh bleſſed *Eternity,* oh *Eternal* bleſſedneſs! How comes it to paſs that ſeldom or never we think upon thee; or if we do at any time, we do it but upon the by? How comes it to

Deut. 34. 5. *Gen.* 5. 27.

paſs,

paſs, that we do not labor more for thee, that we do not ſeek for thee, that we are not ſolicitous for thee. O Lord God, open thou our eyes, that we may ſee and know what *Eternity* is, both that of glory, and that other of torment, and how infinite both; how bleſſed the one, and how miſerable the other. Thou haſt created us unto thee, thou haſt created us unto *Eternity*: For thou art *Eternity*. Thou wouldeſt have us be partakers of thy *Eternity*; Lord, let it be according to thy will. Thou haſt ſaid it; Lord, let it be according to thy word. Thou haſt promiſed; Lord, make good thy promiſe; Make us partakers of thy *Eternity*. Grant that we may ſpend the ſhort moment of time granted to us here in this life; Grant, we beſeech thee, that we may ſpend it in ſuch a Religious and Godly manner, as men that labor for *Eternity*, contend for *Eternity*, ſuffer for *Eternity*. To this end cauſe thy Miniſters often to call upon us to think ſtill upon *Eternity*; make us call one upon another in every place to think upon *Eternity*, that ſo by thy mercy we may Reign with thee, O *Eternity*, and as many as it is poſſible may be kept from periſhing everlaſtingly. Hear this ye *Chriſtians* all, hear it ye *Pagans*, hear it ye *Kings* and *Princes*, hear it ye *Germans*, hear

hear it ye *French*, hear it ye *English*, yea, let all the World hear it. *There can be no ſufficient ſecurity, where there is danger of loſing* Eternity.

Oh long, O profound, Oh bottomleſs, Oh Eternal *Eternity*! *Bleſſed are they, O Lord, that dwell in thy Houſe; they ſhall be ſtill praiſing thee, Pſal.* 84. 4. They ſhall praiſe thee throughout infinite *myriads* of Ages.

Moſes being near unto his death, commending unto God in his Prayers his people *Iſrael*: and bleſſing them, thus took his leave of the Tribe of *Aſher*, and ſaid, *Let Aſher be bleſſed with Children; let him be acceptable to his Brethren, and let him dip his foot in Oyl. Thy ſhoes ſhall be Iron and braſs; and as thy days, ſo ſhall thy ſtrength be. There is none like unto the God of* Jeſurun, *who rideth upon the Heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the Sky. The Eternal God is the refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms, Deut.* 33. 24, 25, 26, 27. Thus God ſtretcheth forth the arms of his power throughout Heaven infinitely: And by his arms all the World, all time, and all things in the world are directed, guided and governed. So God from the beginning, yea, from the *Eternity* of his predeſtination, hath carried in his breaſt all the Godly, and doth protect them

them daily and hourly, and as it were embraceth them with his arms. Aſcend therefore, O my ſoul, and have no more to do with earth and clay. Stretch forth thy ſelf, and aſcend up unto him that rideth upon the Heavens; aſcend up unto thy God, whoſe dwelling is in the higheſt Mountains, thoſe Mountains of *Eternity*: There ſhalt thou ſit in ſafety, and behold the earth beneath: and ſo ſhalt thou plainly perceive how little and of none eſteem all things are here below, which now either ſolicite thee with love, or terrifie thee with fear; thou ſhalt plainly perceive what a ſmall thing it is, whatſoever is *contained* within the *Centre* of the world, that little *Globe* or *point* of earth; thou ſhalt plainly perceive *how* that all *things created* are *vain*, *weak*, *ſhort*, *vile*, yea, vanity it ſelf, yea, rather meer nothing in reſpect of God and of *Eternity*. Therefore ſeek thou after the only true and ſoveraign good, and regard not other things. Truſt in God, rely on him, open thy heart wide to entertain him; tread under the feet of thy affections whatſoever is under the Sun and Moon, whatſoever allureth thee with ſmiles, or terrifieth thee with frowns, think upon *Eternity*, and always keep in mind that excellent ſaying of St. *Hierome*, no labor muſt ſeem hard,

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no time muſt ſeem long, all the while we are ſeeking after Eternal glory.

It is reported by St. *Hierome*, that there was upon a time a certain Camel haunted by an evil Spirit, which being brought before *Hillarion*, a devout and godly man, began to rage in ſuch a ſtrange and terrible manner, as if it would preſently have devoured him: But the Holy man nothing afraid, ſpake thus unto the evil Spirit, Do not think to fright me, thou evil Spirit, although that thou haſt got a Camel on thy back; it is all one to me whether thou comeſt in a Camels skin, or in a Foxes skin: And preſently the fierce Camel fell down before him, and became very tame and gentle, to the great laughter of all thoſe that ſtood by. Such are all flatteries, fawnings, allurements, and tentations of this world; ſuch are all fears, frowns, frights, and terrors. What doſt thou hope for? What doſt thou fear? What doſt thou love? He that rideth upon the Heavens is thy helper; he ſhall embrace thee with his everlaſting arms. With thoſe arms of his he is able to fetter all thine Enemies, whether they fawn or frown upon thee; he is able at a beck to ſqueeze them in pieces like ſo many flies, and break them in pieces like a Potters Veſſel. Doth the pleaſure then of luſt,

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or gluttony, or intemperance sollicite thee? That is nothing: Be not moved at it, pass it by, regard it not; think rather upon the pleasures which are Eternal Art thou terrified with threats, oppressed with sorrows, passed by with contempt, afflicted with sickness, tired out with poverty? All these are a matter of nothing. The more violent these are, the shorter while they will last: Despise them, lift up thine eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh my help, look up to Heaven, *think upon Eternity, There shall no evil happen unto the just, Prov.* 2. 21.

Horat. Carm. lib. 3. *Od.* 3.

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

The just man shall not be afraid,
Though Heaven fall upon his head.

Therefore the just man is never sorrowful: no tribulation doth ever assault him. But are not the tribulations of the just many? Yea, but yet they make nothing of them. That only they count evil, which is Eternal, which separateth a man from God, as sin doth, and Eternal death which is the wages of sin. The Preacher of the Gentiles bids us *Look not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*

ſeen. Why ſo? For, ſaith he, *The things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal.* The things which are not ſeen, the things which are Eternal, thoſe are the things which are great indeed, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

But whileſt we look only at the things which are ſeen, and ſeldom or never at the things which are not ſeen, what do we make of our ſelves but great and fooliſh Boys? Great, but yet fooliſh; at the beſt but Boys. If the Ice fall out of our hands, we preſently fall a crying, and yet that is ſuch a thing that we cannot hold long: We are frighted at ſhadows, and dream of great matters; we ſpend our ſelves on ſuch things as not only ſhall ſhortly paſs away for certain, but are already paſſing away: For it is not ſaid, *The figure*, or *the faſhion of this World ſhall paſſe away*, in the *Future*: 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. But, *The Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, in the *Preſent*. It is paſſing away already. As all the goods which we enjoy here are but tranſitory, ſo all the evils which we ſuffer here are but tranſitory; that cannot continue long. Thoſe things which are not ſeen, and thoſe only have a permanent ſtate they know no end, they have no term, they are not ſubject to any change, they

are

are firm, they are immoveable, they are Eternal. I repeat it again, what I ſaid a little before, for it deſerves to be repeated a thouſand and a thouſand times; no labor muſt ſeem hard, no time muſt ſeem long, all the while we are ſeeking after Eternal Glory.

Symphorianus, a Chriſtian young man after that he was almoſt ſcourged to death, as he was dragged to Execution at *Auguſtodunum*, met his Mother upon the way; But how? Not tearing the hair from her head, or rending her Cloaths, or laying open her Breaſts, or making grievous lamentations, as the manner of fooliſh women is to do: But carrying her ſelf like an Heroical and Chriſtian Lady. For ſhe cryed out, and called unto her Son, and ſaid, *Son, my Son, I ſay, remember life Eternal, look up to Heaven, lift up thine eyes to him that reigneth there. Life is not taken from thee, but is exchanged for a better.* At which words of his Mother, the young man was ſo exceedingly animated, that he went willingly to Execution, and chearfully like a ſtout Champion laid down his head upon the block, and expoſed his throat to the fatal Ax.

Hear this, O Chriſtians all, and remember your ſelves. This is the caſe of every man living; we are on our way to death;

death; we go not ſo faſt, it may be, as *Symphorianus* did; but yet we are all going, and we have not far to go. The Noble Armies of Martyrs which are gone before us, they call unto us from Heaven, and ſay as the Chriſtian and couragious Mother ſaid unto her Son, as he was going to Execution, *Remember life Eternal, look up to Heaven, and lift up your eyes to him that reigneth there.* Carry thy ſelf therefore like a *Symphorian*, whoſoever profeſſeſt thy ſelf to be a Chriſtian. Do not hang back, be not loth to go, withdraw not thy neck from the Yoke, nor thy ſhoulders from the Croſs; be not afraid to ſuffer for Chriſt, be not afraid to die for Chriſt, be not afraid to eat Fire, or to devour the Sword for the name of Chriſt. Here ſhew thy ſelf a man, take good courage, pull up a good heart. And when thou art at any time tempted, when thou art grieved, when thou art made ſorrowful, when thou art vexed, when thou art deſpiſed, when thou art made a laughing-ſtock, when thou art diſgraced, when thou art ſpoiled of thy Goods, when it is with thee as it was with *Job* upon the Dunghil, or, if it can be worſe, then call to mind *Symphorian*, and a thouſand more ſtout Chriſtians ſuch as he was, and learn of them Chriſtian courage and magnanimity,

and boldly and freely break forth into these words, and repeat them often: Whatsoever I suffer here, is but a *Modicum*, it is but short. Farewel then all the world, and all the things that are therein: And welcome to me, thou art welcome ETERNITY.

10 OC 61

Of *Eternity* there is no

FINIS.

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Thomas Montgomery

His Book

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words of a friend
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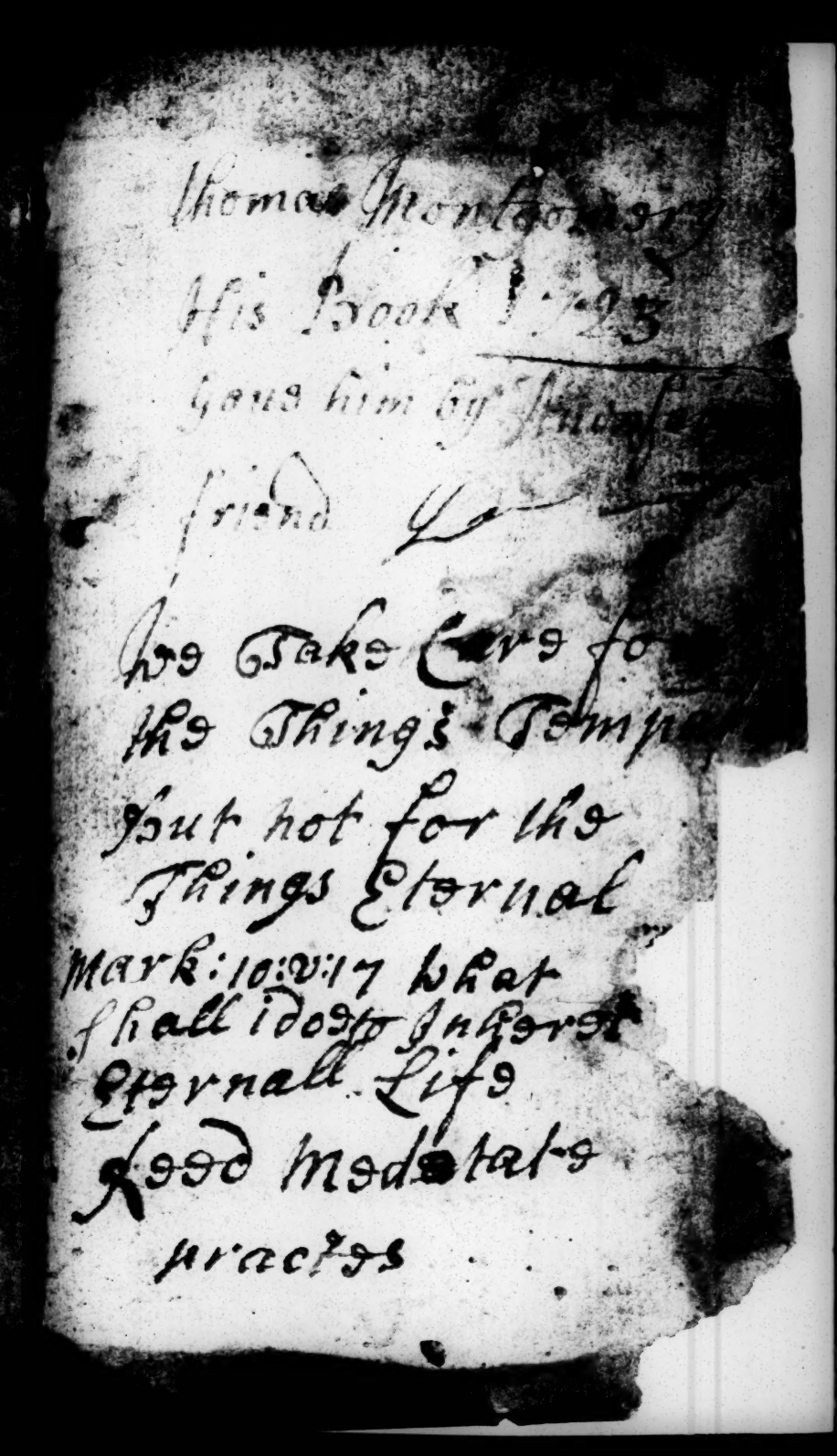
His Book Gaue him
In the yeare of
our Lord one Thousand
sauen hundered and fort
two Gaue by Unfained
friend



thomas Montgomery
His Book 1723
gave him by Anonymous
friend

We Take Care for
the Things Temp[illegible]
but not for the
Things Eternal
Mark: 10: v: 17 What
shall I do to Inheret
Eternall Life
Reed Medetate
practes